THE SECOND GREAT WAR



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THE SECOND GREAT WAR

A Standard History

Edited by

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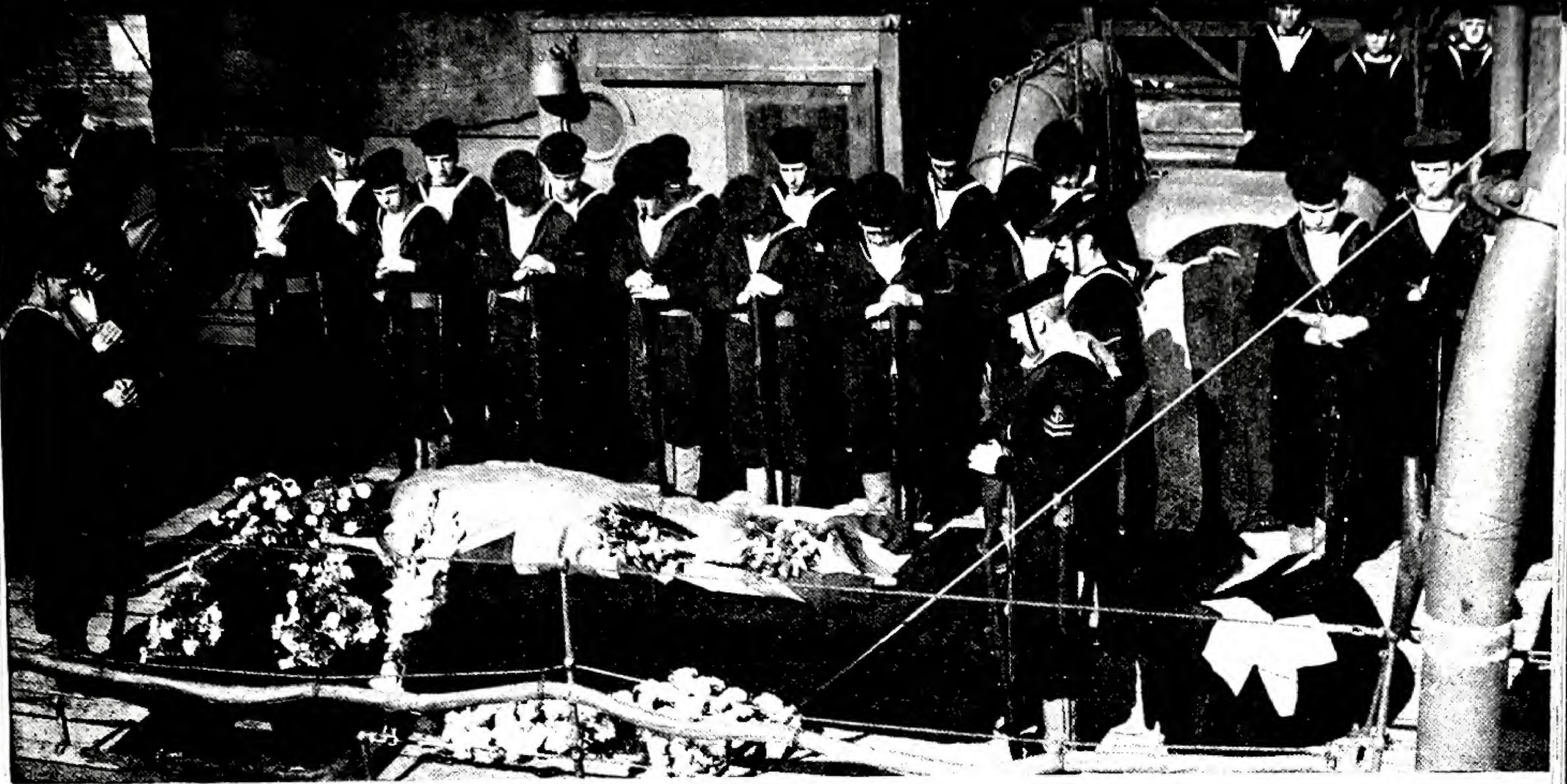
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DESTROYER COMMANDER MAKES HIS LAST PASSAGE

Captain J. G. Bickford, D.S.O., R.N., was killed while in command of H.M. destroyer 'Express,' which the Germans claimed to have sunk; actually, though damaged, the 'Express' made her way safely to port. This news was given in an Admiralty communiqué of September 5, 1940, which also stated that the destroyers 'Ivanhoe' and 'Esk' had been sunk by torpedo or mine. Above, the guard of honour around Captain Bickford's coffin as the ship departs for the funeral service. Below, on board an escort vessel with a British convoy at sea, the skipper reads morning prayers.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Associated Press





Photo, "News Chronicle"

DISTRESSING ASPECT OF THE TERROR BY NIGHT

As other photographs in our pages bear witness, hospitals suffered in almost all night raids, and the habit of the Luftwaffe of deliberately attacking the Red Cross by day left no doubt that they found equal satisfaction in destroying hospitals by night. Several in London were bombed more than once, but, nevertheless, their work of healing went on. St. Matthew's L.C.C. Hospital in Hoxton was among the buildings that suffered on a night in October 1940, and this photograph shows rescue workers carrying away the bodies of victims found among the wreckage of the wards.

Chapter 119

BATTLE OF BRITAIN, LAST PHASE: THE LUFTWAFFE DESPAIRS OF VICTORY

Enemy's Colossal Bomber Losses—He Sends Over High-Flying Fighter-Bombers En Masse—'Alert' Replaces the 'Alarm'—Amazing Exploits of Our Fighter Pilots—How Enemy Casualties Were Computed—Combat Reports—Outcome of the Battle: the Entire Operation Reviewed—Douhet's Theory and its Fallacies—Why the Enemy Abandoned Large-Scale Daylight Attacks—Fire-Raising Raids—Goering Did His Worst

THE last phase of the Battle of Britain, according to the official division, began on October 6, and the conclusion of the battle was at the end of this month. The 5th of October saw a heavy attack and there were spasmodic attempts afterwards to recapture the violence of the earlier onslaughts. But in no case was there any sign that the Luftwaffe had recovered from the damage it had received in the earlier assaults, and the final phase of the battle may almost be said to have consisted of a following up by the Royal Air Force of advantages it had gained in the earlier stages.

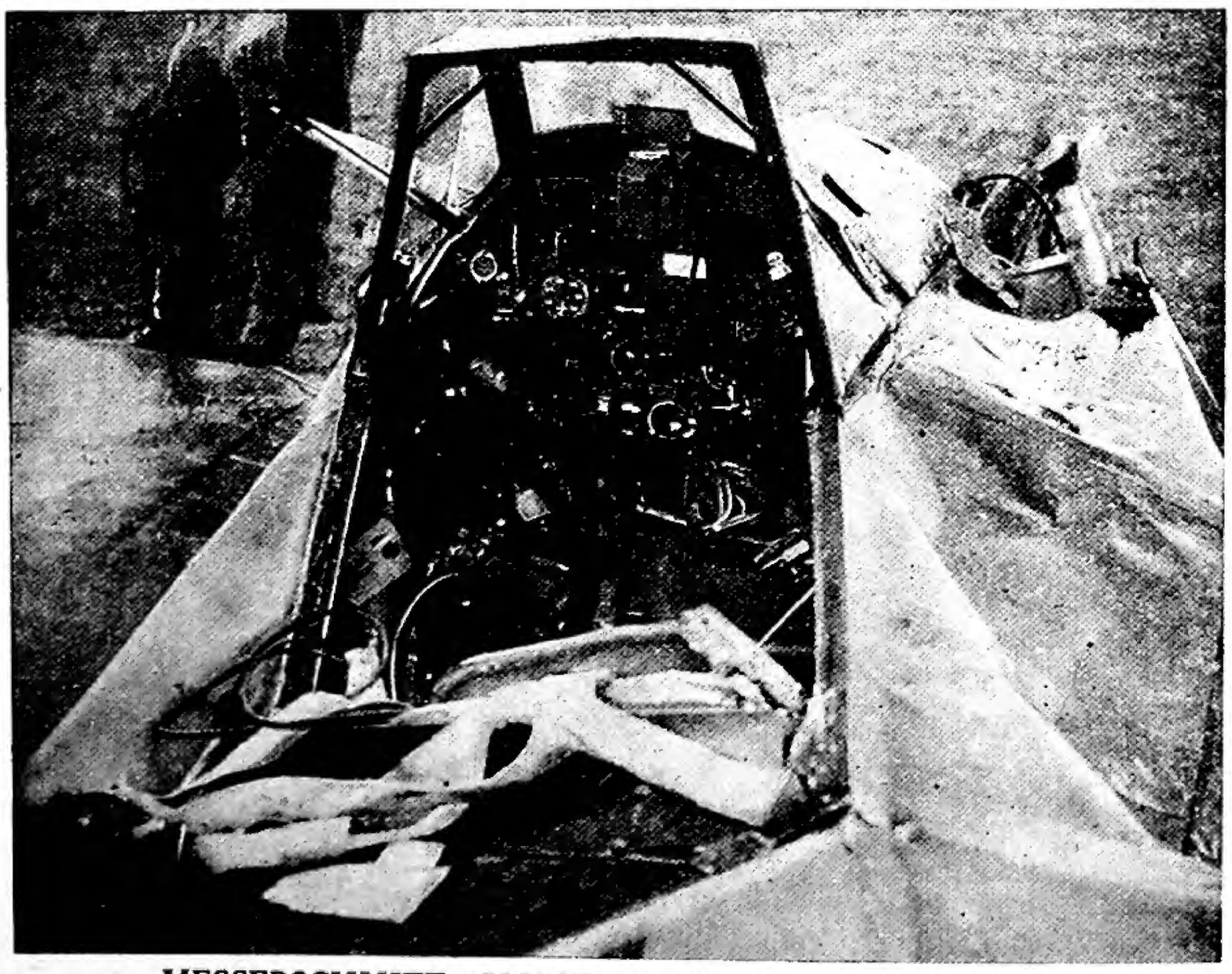
The first sign that another phase of the battle had developed was given when the enemy changed the types of aircraft he was sending over. His original design had been to bomb heavily and to protect the bombers by fighters flying above or around them. But he had now been taught that this method failed. His bomber losses had been so heavy that, although the machines had done damage, it had rarely been to the objectives originally set them. In consequence, the Germans realized that the sending over of bombers in large numbers had become excessively wasteful. It would, however, have been unlike the enemy to have given up without trying everything. His whole method in war was to thrust with all his might and to go on thrusting in face of difficulties and checks.

A New Phase Opens

He used all his ingenuity to divert his effort to some region where the defences were weaker and to capitalize on any point where the other side seemed to be having difficulties. If, even after he had received severe handling, he saw signs of an improvement in the situation he would take advantage of it even up to the last minute, and his remarkable powers of recuperation after heavy losses had contributed to his high reputation as a warrior.

The change that marked the beginning of the final phase was in itself a sign of weakness. The Germans practically withdrew their bombers from all attacks delivered on objectives other than those very close to their own aerodromes. Instead, the enemy sent over fighters and fighter-bombers. Indeed, this phase of the Battle of Britain may be said to have seen the first large-scale introduction of the fighter-bomber. This type of machine had been foreshadowed in the war of 1914–18, when on occasion there had been a need to send over aircraft which could defend themselves against the enemy's fighters but could also strike at ground targets with bombs. The bombs were of very small size, and it remained true in the battle of 1940 also that the bombs which the fighters could carry were very much smaller than the normal range carried by bombers. But there had been a step up since 1914-18, so that the fighter-bomber was not entirely negligible for striking at ground targets.

The Messerschmitt 110, for example, could carry 1,000 lb. of bombs and at the same time it was able, when challenged by our fighters, to cope with them with much better chance of success than a machine like the Heinkel 111 or the Junkers 88. The Messerschmitt 110 was a fairly large twin-engined machine and therefore well suited to combining fighting and bombing duties. But the Germans in this stage of the Battle also pressed into service single-engined Messerschmitt 109s, and forced these to carry two small bombs held in improvised racks fitted under the wings. The enemy had, therefore, a fairly large force of fighter-bombers which could bring over a load of bombs sufficient



MESSERSCHMITT 'HOIST WITH ITS OWN PETARD'

In the last phase of the Battle of Britain the enemy employed many Messerschmitt 109 fighters fitted with makeshift bomb-carriers to take two bombs. But this improvisation had its perils, and here is an Me 109 whose bombs were exploded in mid-air by bullets from a pursuing Spitfire.

Photo, Fox

to damage less heavily defended objectives, and it was with these that he plunged into the final stage of the fight. These formations were able to move at much higher speeds than those which had taken part in the previous phases of the Battle, and the small bombs did not to any very large extent reduce their general performance. But this method of attack was inevitably less weighty than the earlier method. Even so, the Germans did not seem to be entirely satisfied that it would give them a sufficient immunity from the Royal Air Force fighter squadrons, and in consequence they used cloud cover whenever they could, and exercised great ingenuity to avoid our defences. They flew very high, made diversions, and, if faced by strong fighter formations, did not hesitate to jettison their bombs and "run for it."





CHILDREN IN THE DEEP LONDON TUBE SHELTERS

A mother and her five children, having been bombed out of their East End home three times, found a dormitory on the spiral staircase of a London tube. Top, a warden putting babies to bed in hammocks slung across the lines of the Underground railway between Aldwych and Holborn, taken out of service in September, 1940, to provide an air-raid shelter.

Photos, Planet News, "Daily Mirror"

Fighting Over Five Miles Up

The brunt of the early stages of the fighting fell upon No. 11 Group of the Fighter Command of the Royal Air Force, which in three-and-a-half days accounted for 167 enemy aircraft with a loss to itself of 45 pilots. Fighting had now gone up in height and encounters were taking place frequently at 30,000 feet and more. The earlier German tactics whereby heavy bomber formations toured over the country quite close to the ground were not repeated. Sometimes London was reached by fast, high-flying Messerschmitt 109s with their small bombs, but the A.R.P. defences were now sufficiently practised in coping with damage that the effect was so small as to be negligible. The people of our cities displayed growing confidence in the powers of the air defences by day, and began to take shelter less often when the alert was sounded. Though not, perhaps, a very wise change, it was a logical step and a great tribute to the R.A.F. It was at this time that the Government proposed to regard the alert as a general signal and recommended the public to take cover only after an "imminent danger" signal had been issued by the local roof watcher. This scheme, while safeguarding the workers, avoided unnecessary loss of working hours.



pilots were examined immediately upon their return from patrol, and were compared and matched up with reports from ground positions such as anti-aircraft gun sites. The time factor was especially taken into account in order that there should be no risk of one enemy casualty being counted twice. The whole picture of an aerial engagement is displayed on the table of the operations room, where the approach of enemy aircraft is recorded by the movement of symbols over the map. The strength of enemy formations is shown, and a complete record of a formation is made from the time it crosses the coast to the time it leaves

There occurred during this phase of the Battle many individual combats in which our pilots showed the greatest heroism and a high degree of skill. On

1 Hurricane Against 12 Nazis

one occasion, for instance, a lone Hurricane encountered twelve Messerschmitt 109s. Our pilot first saw them when they were flying directly towards him, and he immediately put the nose of his aeroplane down so that they went overhead. He picked off the last aeroplane on the port side of the enemy formation, bringing it down with a burst delivered in passing. Left with a good margin of speed, he used it to sweep up and round in a sort of Immelmann turn, which brought him behind a second Messerschmitt on the starboard side and at the extreme end of the formation. This machine he also managed to shoot down very quickly.

He was also able as he turned away to damage a third enemy machine at the rear end of the formation. By this time the enemy pilots (still in a superiority of 9 to 1) had become fully aware of what was happening and would undoubtedly have made an attempt to avenge their losses. In consequence the Hurricane pilot broke off the battle and got away without any damage to his machine.

The British method of assessing casualties inflicted upon the enemy had always been strict, and the R.A.F. took particular care to avoid exaggerated claims and to obtain the fullest information for every machine it claimed. The combat reports of the

HEROIC WORK OF A.R.P. RESCUE PARTIES

A girl is being rescued from a heap of rubble which was a London house. Saws and hatchets had to be used to get her free. Top: something of the ordeal through which this casualty passed in his seventeen hours' imprisonment among the débris of a bombed house is seen in the expression of his eyes. A barking dog buried with his master led to the rescue.

Photos, "Daily Mirror"



NAZI GUN DESTROYED NAZI 'PLANE

Cpl. Sims and Pte. Shaw with the Spandau machine-gun which destroyed a Messerschmitt 109. The gun was salvaged from a Dornier 17 brought down over the S.E. coast in October, 1940, and mounted by a detachment of the Somerset Light Infantry on a high-angle mounting. The Messerschmitt, flying at about 1,000 feet, was hit and crashed into the sea two miles from the shore. On the right, the German pilot, who was rescued, climbing down the ladder from the lifeboat.

Photos, Fox.

again. Comparison of the strength when entering our defence zone and the number when leaving gives an indication of casualties to be taken into account in conjunction with reports about other formations.

When the Germans found that they were losing the Battle of Britain they sought desperately to minimize their defeats by an urgent and unscrupulous use of propaganda. Day by day they issued figures purporting to give the casualties of both sides, but, in fact, grossly distorting them. The result was that the stage was soon reached when the German figures were not taken seriously in any country, whether neutral or belligerent.

The R.A.F. combat reports were the most immediate contacts available to the general public. Some were vivid, but most were extremely short and laconic. The pilots merely stated the facts without any flourish of descriptive writing. Nevertheless, some of these reports had a special merit of their own, and one may be quoted which was given out officially by the Air Ministry.

We sighted a strong formation of enemy aircraft and carried out a head-on attack. The enemy scattered, jettisoned their bombs and turned for home. We encountered heavy cannon fire.

A Hurricane pilot who attacked a large enemy formation single-handed said: "There were no other British fighters in sight, so I made a head-on attack on the first section of the bombers, opening at 600 yards and closing to 200 yards."

He goes on to report how he followed up the enemy and continued to attack until his ammunition gave out.



The air Battle of Britain was the first occasion in the history of war in which large air forces working independently had come to grips. It was the biggest air operation there had been, and it extended both fighters and day bombers to the fullest limits of their powers. It will be looked upon as the first battle to elucidate the problem of day-flying bombers and to sum up their powers of penetrating fighter defences when these defences are well organized, well equipped, and well manned. It must be regarded as casting doubt upon the ability of the day bomber to get past strong fighter formations. The outcome of the Battle was favourable to Britain. It checked large-scale daylight raiding by the enemy and enabled people to continue their work with higher efficiency than would have been possible had the Germans succeeded in sustaining their attack.

The official figures for the damage done are impressive, but no one who has studied the effects of a dive-bombing attack by day when unopposed by fighter forces can doubt that the damage was a small fraction of what would have been achieved had our fighters been unable to offer such a vigorous and successful defence. The London docks were damaged and many famous buildings were hit. Buckingham Palace was made the direct objective of various dive-bombing assaults, and was hit, but the hostile aircraft were in nearly all cases shot down. When the enemy machines could be located they were destroyed, and it was only when they could get through in the dark or under cloud cover that they managed to launch their bombs and get away safely.

How Dive-Bombing Was Stopped

During these attacks, which extended from August 8 to October 31, the Germans lost 2,375 aircraft. This figure takes no account of those damaged beyond repair. The Royal Air Force lost 375 pilots killed and 358 wounded. Its aircraft losses were a good deal heavier than this, but they did not approach the German losses by a very wide margin, and therefore from every point of view the balance was favourable to the Royal Air Force.

A brief assessment will now be attempted of the whole operation known as the Battle of Britain. It lasted for 84 days, if the official beginning and

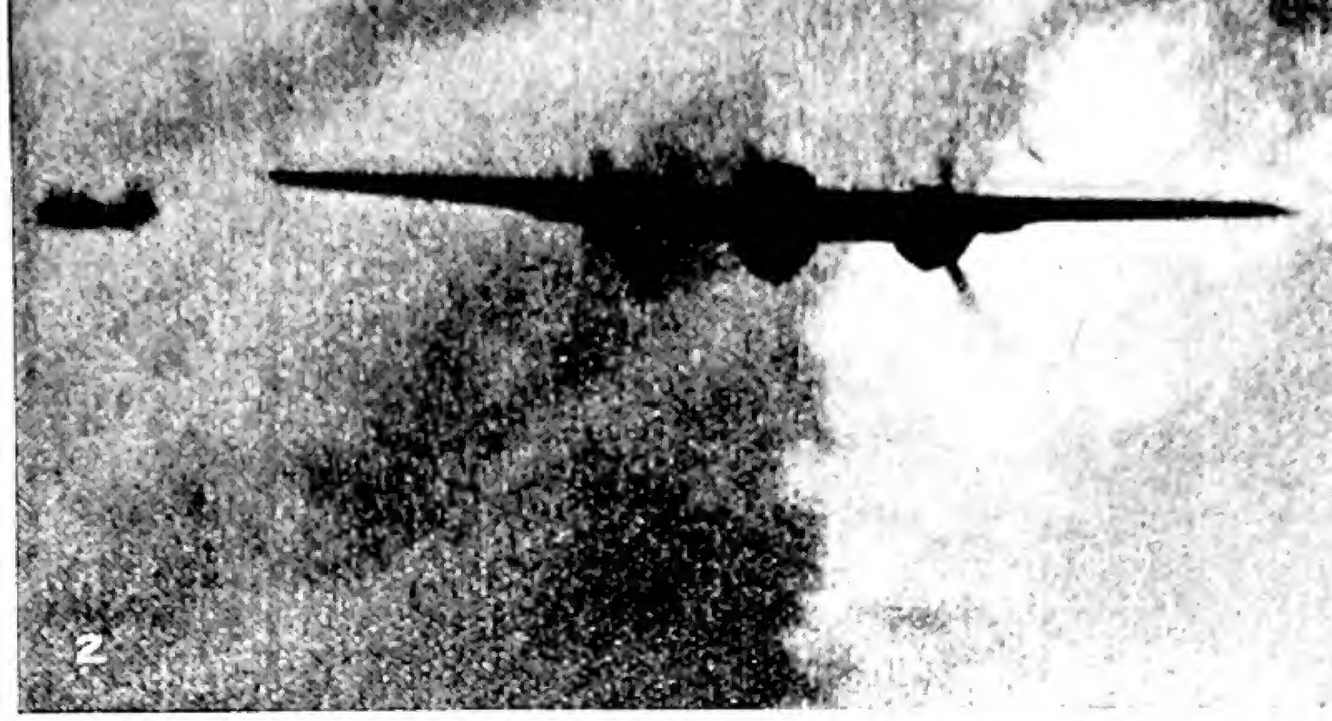
German and British Air Losses over Britain

October 1-31, 1940

Date	German Losses	British Losses	R.A.F. Pilots Saved	Date	German Losses	British Losses	R.A.F. Pilots Saved
Oct.				Oct.			
1	5	3	—	18	—	1	—
2	13	1	—	19	2	—	—
3	1	—	—	20	7	3	3
4	3	1	—	21	5	—	—
5	23	9	4	22	3	6	2
6	2	—	—	23	1	—	—
7	28	16	10	24	2	—	—
8	8	2	—	25	17	10	7
9	4	1	1	26	6	2	—
10	5	5	2	27	10	8	4
11	8	9	6	28	7	—	—
12	12	10	6	29	30	7	5
13	2	2	2	30	9	5	1
14	—	—	—	31	—	—	—
15	18	15	9				
16	6	—	—	Total	241	119	62
17	4	3	—				

Total R.A.F. Pilot Casualties, August 8 to October 31: Killed 375; Wounded 358



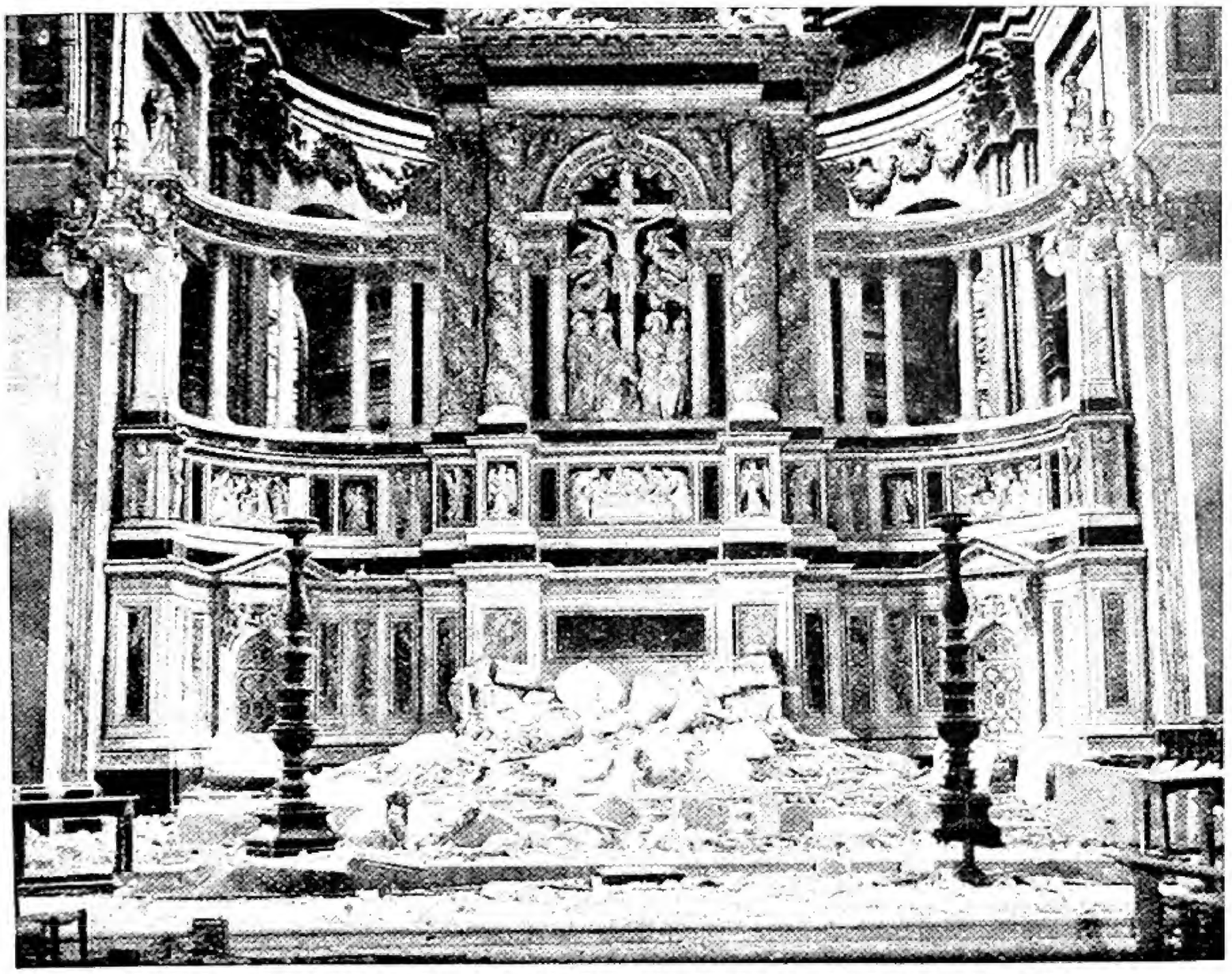


PHOTOGRAPHED IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE

An automatic camera gun (operated when the machine-guns were fired) enabled our Hurricane and Spitfire pilots to take these amazing combat photographs during the last days of the Battle of Britain. 1, A formation of Dorniers comes under fire. 2, From a Dornier heavily attacked by the R.A.F., one of the crew (left) bales out. 3, Two Heinkel 111s are caught in the converging fire from British fighters. 4. Smoke pours from one engine of a doomed Heinkel and the other is blazing. 5, Combat photograph of a Heinkel 111.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright





HIGH ALTAR AT ST. PAUL'S DESTROYED

Early in October, 1940, a bomb penetrated the roof at the east end and heavy stonework fell on the high altar 90 feet below, destroying it and damaging the reredos. The altar was erected in 1888. Wren's vaulting resisted successfully the shock of explosion.

Photo, "News Chronicle"

ending points are accepted, though German attacks did not suddenly begin at the opening date and suddenly cease on the ending date. The great weight of the attack, however, was found between these dates. The plan of the German General Staff can hardly be doubted. The original intention was to attack the British people from the air on such a large scale that their morale would be shattered, their factories shut down, and their defences destroyed. It was without question the objective of this assault to use the air, and the air only, for a knock-out blow on Britain. In this the Germans were working to the theory of General Giulio Douhet, the Italian, who first enunciated the doctrine of air war against civilian populations. Douhet held the belief that a sufficiently intensive aerial onslaught could so wreck the organization and economy of a civilian community that that community would be forced to sue for peace.

The Germans undoubtedly held that their air force was large enough to produce this result in Britain, though they probably expected to have to make some kind of landing to conclude the operation and occupy the country. The Douhet theory visualized the formation of an immense fleet of bombing aircraft, larger even than the Luftwaffe, and the success or failure of the theory is partly dependent upon the size of the fleet that can be employed. Douhet was not a great believer in fighters, and wished to see air power concentrated on the striking forces. In this he was proved by the Battle of Britain to have been misled. This Battle showed that the fighter is master of the bomber and that, provided the technical quality is high enough, a relatively small force of fighters can cope efficiently with a much larger force of bombers.

Fundamentally the Douhet theory may be sound provided the fleet of bombers is sufficiently large and provided it is not opposed by strong fighter formations. In neither of these respects were the Germans correctly positioned to work the method against Great Britain. Their bomber fleet, although immense, was not quite large enough to work in the manner prescribed by Douhet, while it had to face extremely strong, well-equipped and skilful fighter organization. The first part of the Battle of Britain, therefore, consisted of an unsuccessful attempt on the part of the enemy to put into practice the Douhet theory. The next part was really a German improvisation designed to overcome conditions that had become apparent during the first part and still to maintain the attack. This was the time when the entire responsibility for the operations on Great Britain was passed to the fighters, and the fighter-bomber came into prominence.

Why German Bombers Failed

This attack might have had greater success from the point of view of enemy



WREN CHURCH IN THE STRAND IN RUINS

St. Clement Danes, the famous church of the nursery rhyme, was straddled by bombs that fell in the Strand on the night of October 8. It had previously been subjected to bomb damage and was later to become a melancholy skeleton of a building. Built in 1681 from Wren's designs, it had a Grinling Gibbons pulpit.

Photo, Wide World

THE CITY OF LONDON IN OCTOBER, 1940

On the night of October 7–8 a heavy raid took place. This was the raid that was supposed by the Germans to have 'brought the succession of reprisal attacks which have shaken Britain to a culminating point.' Next day this photograph was taken from St. Paul's looking westward. In the street below there was little evidence of shaken morale. Above there is a complete absence of visible damage.

Photo, Planet News



WHAT A DAYLIGHT RAIDER DID

On the morning of October 8 a few bombers got through to London and flew low over main thoroughfares, blowing up buildings. The driver of this bus and several passengers were killed. *Photo, Keystone*

losses (or, in other words, the Germans might have been able to launch their formations over this country without sustaining such crippling casualties), but it could not have succeeded in the weight of its attack on ground targets. The fighter-bomber cannot carry the weight to knock out well defended ground positions. That was the broad outline of the Battle of Britain. But there were innumerable minor patterns within it which have been discussed in their place, and, finally, it must be noted that perhaps the most decisive factor in the whole thing was the detection and information organization used by the Royal Air Force. This is a highly complex organization the details of which cannot yet be given. It was created largely during the period that Sir Hugh Dowding was Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Fighter Command. It used the Royal Observer Corps for obtaining information of the movements of enemy aircraft, of their course, height, and position.

Modern fighter aircraft can work only upon sound information. Without such information, swiftly spread and instantly acted upon, the modern fighter is completely useless. Patrols flying about searching for the enemy without full information from the ground are wasting petrol. Their chances of finding enemy formations quickly enough to attack them effectively are remote. Information is, therefore, the foundation of fighter defence. It is the same both by day and by night, but obviously the problems by night are much greater. It may be possible, for instance, to bring a fighter within a mile or so of enemy aircraft by night, but at that distance he will not be able to see the enemy and for the final stages of the chase the best information

organization is inadequate. It is for this reason that the fight against the night bomber was from the beginning largely a scientific battle. Night fighters were even then being specially trained and machines adapted, including the Blenheim, Hurricane and the new Boulton Paul Defiant.

At the time of the Battle of Britain the scientific methods for allowing the fighters to make contact with night bombers were not sufficiently developed.

Why They Bombed by Night

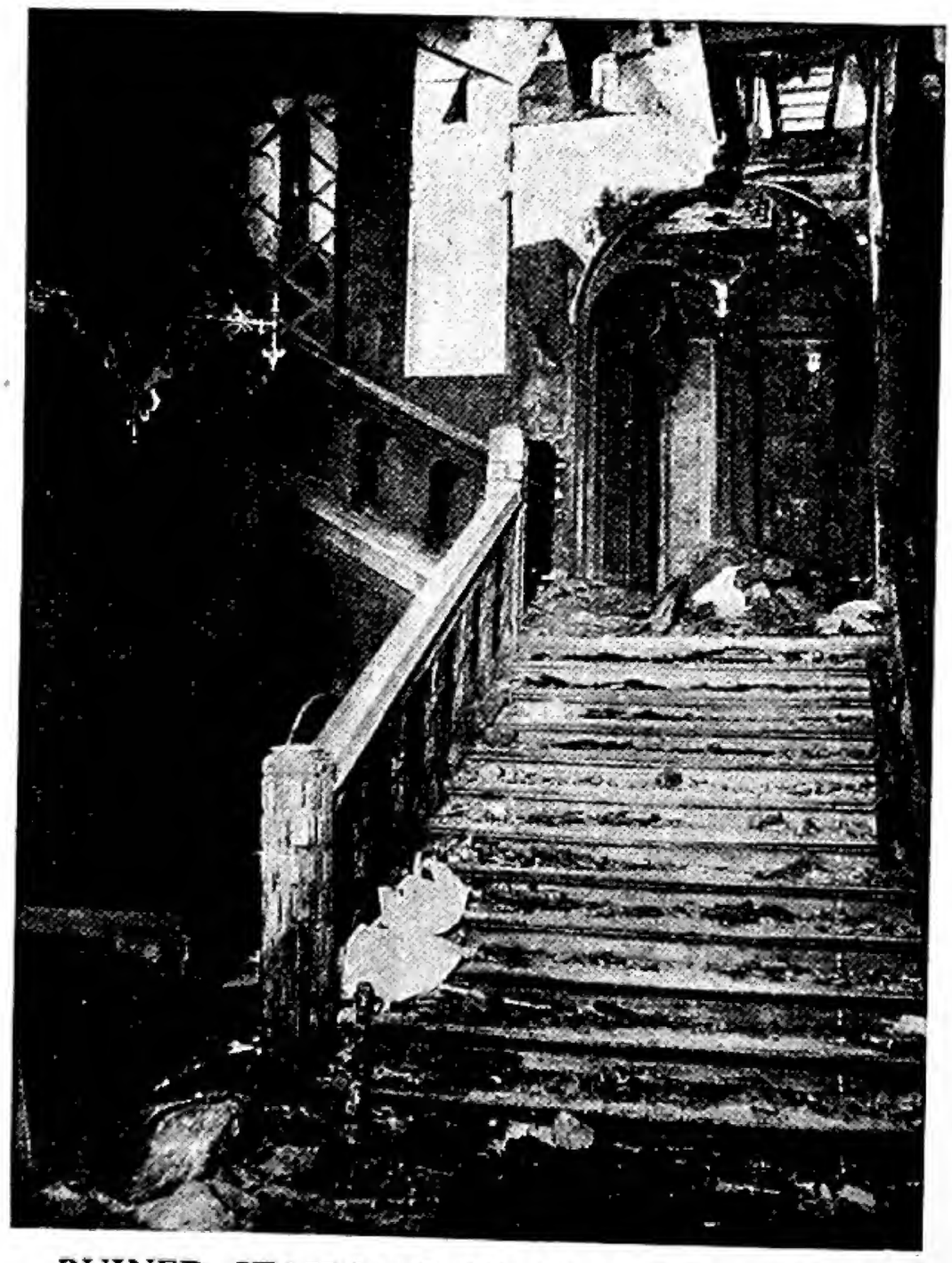
But it was not for this reason that the Germans concentrated on day bombing. Their General Staff had previously expressed the view that day bombing was the only sort worth doing. High German officers had stated that it was only by day bombing that targets could be picked out and attacked with sufficient accuracy to make the effort pay for itself. By night, these officers had said, bombing was completely useless because of its relative inaccuracy. It will be seen later that the German methods suddenly changed. It may well be asked whether this change was brought about by some subtle reasoning on the part of the German war chiefs—reasoning which led them to alter their previous views and suddenly to find that night bombing was actually more effective than day bombing—or whether, to put it bluntly, the change was forced upon them by the enormous casualties inflicted upon the Luftwaffe in daylight.



FIRE-FIGHTERS OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

Although the mass use of incendiaries was yet to come, much destruction was caused by fire bombs in the autumn attacks on London. On the night of October 15 the Germans claimed that 1,000 'planes had dropped 1,000 bombs, almost certainly an exaggeration. Nevertheless, men of the London Fire Services had an arduous job, as may be gathered from this photograph.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"



RUINED STAIRCASE IN HOLLAND HOUSE

One of the last great 'country houses' in London, Lord Ilchester's Kensington mansion, built in 1607, was hit by a Nazi oil-bomb in October, 1940. The east wing was partly saved by the firemen, but the rest of the house was destroyed.

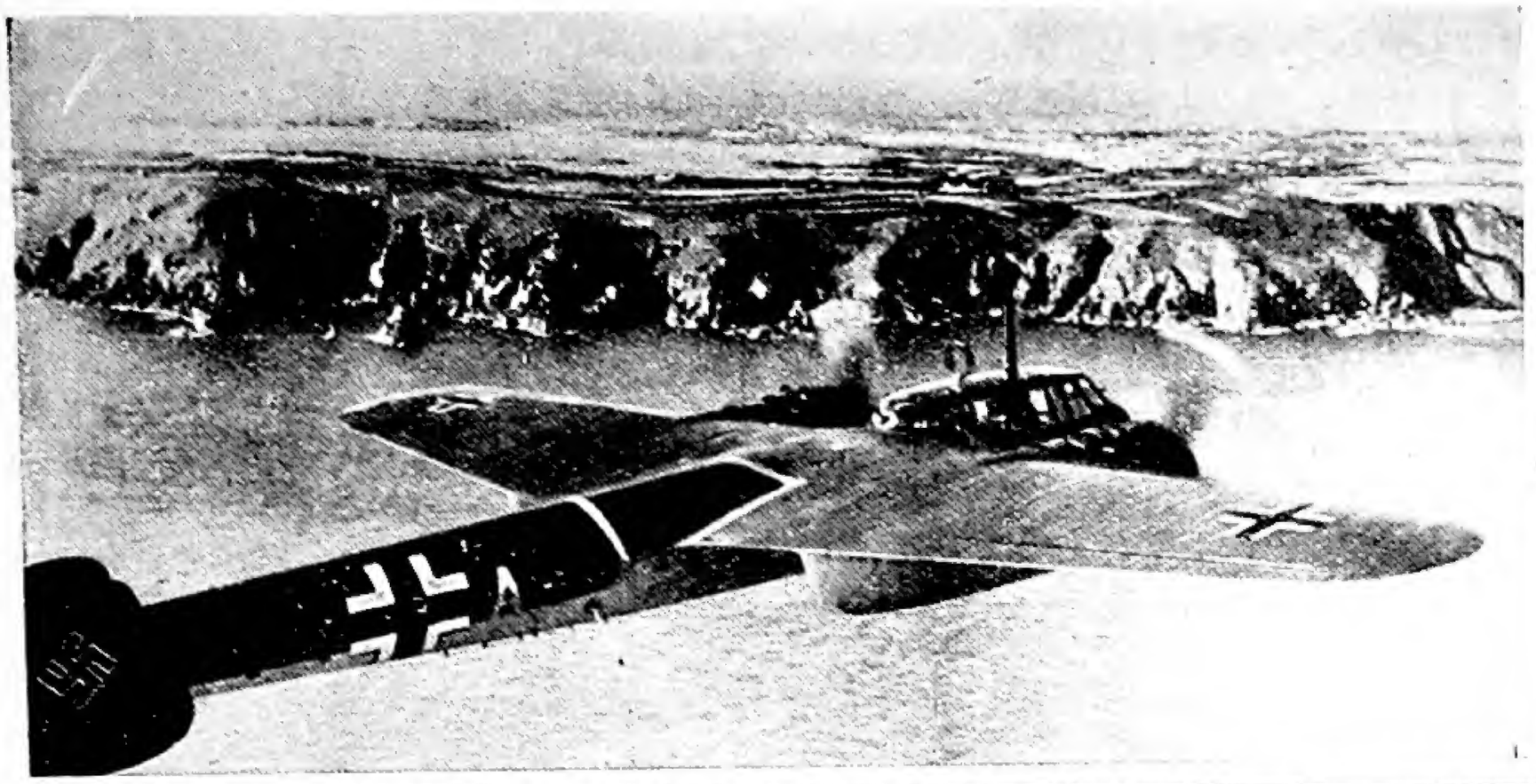
Photo, Wide World

The impartial observer will not hesitate long before coming to a conclusion upon this point. The Battle of Britain was an immense daylight onslaught, and it followed in planning and in method the previously worked out schemes of the German High Command. At that time this Command had no intention of resorting to night bombing. It believed that it could do all it wanted by day. It had not used night bombing in Poland, in Norway, or in France to any extent. Until the Battle of Britain went against the Luftwaffe the Germans had never in any field made large use of night bombing. The Battle of Britain, amongst other things, switched the main force of German bombing attacks from the day to the night, and although this resulted in heavy damage and heavy casualties, these were trifling compared with what would have been inflicted had the enemy day bombers managed to come over with impunity.

Examples occurred during the Battle of Britain which did show that day bombing, if the machines can get through to their target and if they are not harassed by fighters all the way, can be exceedingly accurate and exceedingly damaging to the war effort. Some of our aerodromes were badly knocked about during that stage of the conflict when the casualties inflicted on the enemy had not yet been sufficiently high to deter his pilots from making for predetermined objectives.

At the end of the Battle of Britain the Royal Air Force was stronger in bombers than it had ever been. In fighters it had lost considerable numbers, as was inevitable, but the Fighter Command had at no time been so whittled down that there was any risk of its collapsing. Its pilots had in some instances been working extremely hard and had spent many hours daily in the air, and had only the rarest rests. But at the end of the Battle, when the Luftwaffe was defeated, these men were in as good physical condition as at the beginning and their morale was even higher. They had measured their strength against the full might of Field-Marshal Goering's vaunted air force and had defeated it.

And so also, in their own sphere, did the civilians defeat Goering's heavy







THROUGH THE ENEMY'S EYES

By means of a pocket lamp (above) a Nazi observer, said to be over London, examines his maps and instruments to get his bearings. Top, left is the sinister shape of a German Do 17 approaching the island of Guernsey, and beneath, Goering addressing members of the Luftwaffe in occupied France.

Photos, Keystone; E.N.A.; Wide World

and determined attack upon their morale and upon the centres of production. The German communiqué of October 8, announcing the savage attack on London on the night of the 7th, said that it had "brought the succession of reprisal attacks which have shaken Britain to a culminating point." But despite incendiary bombs on hospitals, shattered and blasted shops and offices in London and elsewhere, there was little evidence next morning of shaken morale. Even through low-level attacks in daylight that same morning on the main thoroughfares of London, when a bus was destroyed and tramcars and trains were struck, the people went to work undaunted, and a few hours later London's transport had repaired the damage done and restored communications. It was during the raids of this period that a bomb penetrated the roof over the east end of St. Paul's Cathedral and demolished the high altar, and other bombs seriously damaged Henry VII's Chapel and other parts of Westminster Abbey, and an incendiary set St. Margaret's Church on fire.

Liverpool was also heavily attacked, and Canterbury Cathedral damaged when some 350 Messerschmitt fighter-bombers came over the South-East coast and up the Thames Estuary. On October 17 the Cathedral was again attacked and the Deanery damaged.

By October 12 London had experienced its 200th alert, and two days later its fiercest night bombing raid, which included showers of incendiaries, some of an explosive type. From the middle of October the German raiders abandoned attempts at precision bombing and made their attacks from heights of 20,000 feet or more. Another large-scale daylight raid on London on the 15th, with a mass raid at night by fighter-bombers and other machines, including a heavy attack on the Midlands, marked the culminating point, and from this time it was officially noted that both by day and night the raids diminished in intensity. It was clear that the Luftwaffe was changing its tactics, and although these changes diminished the heavy German aircraft losses, and from time to time brought British and enemy losses to something like equality, the essential fact was that heavy bombing attacks had failed in Goering's primary purpose of the demoralization of the British people and the destruction of factories and cities.

Raids on a varying scale, however, were continued throughout the month; on some days only a small number of single aircraft came over, but on Sunday



Photo, Topical Press

EFFECT OF A BOMB ON ANCIENT CANTERBURY

These old cottages were wrecked when a German bomb fell on Canterbury in the autumn of 1940. In the background is the celebrated cathedral, one of the civilized world's most cherished shrines. Everything that A.R.P. could do to protect it was done, and its rare glass windows were removed early in the war, but the cathedral incurred some damage from blast.

the 20th pitched battles high in the sky took place during most of the day, and fairly heavy raids were made on London and the Midlands at night. On the following night there were persistent attacks on London, and Liverpool experienced its 200th raid. Again on the 23rd there was a considerable amount of aimless night bombing on London and on the Home Counties, and the West of Scotland had its worst experience up to that time.

The last determined daylight attacks on London occurred on October 25 and 29. The first was a morning attack on a large scale on the London suburbs, when something like 400 machines took part, and among other incidents a line of standing tramcars was bombed, two being hit. In the night raids on the same day the German communiqué announced for the first time that Italian airmen had been over Britain, the figure, according to Rome, being 200 machines. The enemy paid for these attacks with the loss of 17 machines and their crews: British losses amounted to ten machines and three pilots.

On the 29th there were four daylight raids on London, when 50 Nazi fighters and fighter-bombers took part in one attack, and later in the day an even larger number flew up the Estuary, but in both instances the majority of the enemy were turned back by fighters and A.A. gunfire. On this day the R.A.F. achieved the remarkable figure of 30 enemy machines shot down with loss to themselves of only 7 aircraft and 2 pilots. This included the fierce fighting over the Portsmouth area and some night fighting over London, Liverpool, Wales, South-East Scotland and the North-East and South-East coasts and districts of England. Considering that the enemy machines engaged were almost entirely high-performance fighter-bombers, this, the last of the big victories in the 84-day Battle of Britain, reflected very high credit upon the organization of the Fighter Command and the valour and competence of the British fighter pilots.

Thereafter the fighting died away, and on November 3, the first time for 57 consecutive nights, London knew no alert period. Goering was forced to the admission that he had done his worst. The Battle of Britain was over. The victory was, in the words of the official record, a "defeat of the German Air Force itself, defeat of a carefully designed strategical plan, defeat of that which Hitler most longed for—the invasion of this island. The Luftwaffe which, as Goebbels said on the eve of the battle, had 'prepared the final conquest of the last enemy, England,' did its utmost and paid very heavily for the attempt." The triumph was mainly that of the Fighter Command, its excellent organization, and its valorous, never daunted and never tiring pilots and staff.

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES
in 84 Days of Battle of Britain
August 8–October 31, 1940

	Killed	*Injured*	*Totals*
August ..	1,075	1,261	2,336
September	6,954	10,615	17,569
October ..	6,334	8,695	15,029
	14,363	20,571	34,934

Notes:
1st week September, 6,000 casualties
4th week October, 2,000 casualties
Daylight Casualties: Killed, 1,782; Injured, 3,596
Night Casualties: Killed, 12,581; Injured, 16,975

BRITAIN IS SCARRED BUT STANDS INDOMITABLE

In his survey of the war situation on October 8, 1940, the Prime Minister made some arresting comparisons between civilian bombing casualties in the recent Battle of Britain and those that occurred in the last war. We also give below Mr. Amery's verdict on the German air onslaught.

MR. CHURCHILL, IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, OCTOBER 8, 1940:

A MONTH has passed since Herr Hitler turned his rage and malice on to the civil population of our great cities, and particularly on London. He declared in his speech of September 4 that he would raze our cities to the ground, and since then he has been trying to carry out his fell purpose.

Naturally the first question we should ask is to what extent the full strength of the German bombing force has been deployed. I will give the House the best opinion I have been able to form on what is necessarily to some extent a matter of speculation. After their very severe mauling on August 15, the German short-range dive-bombers, of which there are several hundreds, have been kept carefully out of the air fighting. This may be, of course, because they are being held in reserve so that they may play their part in a general plan of invasion or reappear in another theatre of war. We have therefore had to deal with the long-range German bombers alone.

It would seem that, taking day and night together, nearly 400 of these machines have on the average visited our shores every 24 hours. We are doubtful whether this rate of sustained attack could be greatly exceeded; no doubt a concentrated effort could be made for a few days at a time, but this would not sensibly affect the monthly average. Certainly there has been a considerable tailing off in the last ten days, and all through the month that has passed since the heavy raids began on September 7 we have had a steady decline in casualties and damage. . . .

Let us now proceed to examine the effect of this ruthless and indiscriminate attack upon the easiest of all targets—namely, the great built-up areas of this land. The Germans have recently volunteered some statements of a boastful nature about the weight of explosives which they have discharged upon us during the whole war and also upon some particular occasions. These statements are not necessarily untrue and they do not appear unreasonable to us.

We were told on September 23 that 22,000 tons of explosives had been discharged upon Great Britain since the beginning of the war. No doubt this included the mines on the coast. We were told also that on last Thursday week 251 tons were thrown upon London in a single night; that is to say, only a few tons less than the total dropped on the whole country throughout the last war.

More Bombs Kill Fewer People

Now we know exactly what our casualties have been. On that particular Thursday night 180 persons were killed in London as a result of 251 tons of bombs; that is to say, it took one ton of bombs to kill three-quarters of a person. We know, of course, exactly the ratio of loss in the last war, because all the facts were ascertained after it was over. In that war small bombs of earlier patterns which were used killed ten persons for every ton discharged in the built-up areas. Therefore, the deadliness of the attack in this war appears to be only one-thirteenth of that of 1914–1918, or let us say, so as to be on the safe side, that it is less than one-tenth of the mortality attaching to the Germans' bombing attack in the last war.

What is the explanation? There can only be one explanation—namely, the vastly improved methods of shelter which have been adopted. In the last war there were hardly any air-raid shelters, and very few basements had been strengthened. Now we have this ever-growing system of shelters, among which the Anderson shelter justly deserves its fame, and the mortality has been reduced to one-thirteenth, or, say, at least one-tenth. This appears, as I say, not only to be remarkable, but also reassuring. It has altered, of course, the whole of the estimates we had made of the severity of the attacks to which we should be exposed.

Whereas when we entered the war at the call of duty and honour we expected to sustain losses which might amount to 3,000 killed in a single night and 12,000 wounded night after night, and we had made hospital arrangements on the basis of 250,000 casualties merely as a first provision, we have actually had, since it began, up to last Saturday, as a result of air bombing, about 8,500 killed and 13,000 wounded. This shows that things do not always turn out as badly as one expects. Also it shows that one should never hesitate, as a nation or as an individual, to face dangers because they appear to the imagination to be so very formidable.

Since the heavy raiding began on September 7 the figures of killed and seriously wounded have declined steadily week by week from over 6,000 in the first week to just under 5,000 in the second week, to about 4,000 in the third week, and to under 3,000 in the last of the four weeks. These are casualties—dead and seriously wounded.

Better Homes will Rise from the Ruins

THE destruction of property has, however, been very considerable. Most painful is the number of small houses inhabited by working folk which have been destroyed, but the loss has also fallen heavily upon the West End, and all classes have suffered evenly, as they would desire to do. I do not propose to give exact figures of the houses which have been destroyed or seriously damaged. That is our affair. We will rebuild them more to our credit than some of them were before. London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, may have much more to suffer, but they will rise from their ruins more healthy and, I hope, more beautiful.

Statisticians may amuse themselves by calculating that, after making allowance for the working of the law of diminishing returns through the same house being struck twice or three times over, it would take ten years at the present rate for half the houses of London to be demolished. After that, of course, progress would be much slower. Quite a lot of things are going to happen to Herr Hitler and the Nazi regime before even ten years are up, and even Signor Mussolini has some experiences ahead of him which he had not foreseen at the time when he thought it safe and profitable to stab the stricken and prostrate French Republic in the back. Neither by material damage nor by slaughter will the British people be turned from their solemn and inexorable purpose.

MR. AMERY, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, IN A SPEECH AT GOSPORT, OCTOBER 27:

IN the last two months we have fought and won one of the decisive battles of history. It is this air battle over England to which Hitler and Goering looked to ensure the success of the invasion which was to have ended the war with our overwhelming and irretrievable defeat. That plan has miscarried, thanks to the heroism of a few thousand young men in our Air Force and to the steadiness of a great nation. Every attempt of the German Air Force to come over in strength was defeated by the sheer courage, nerve and gay gallantry of our airmen. It has been a remarkable victory of quality over numbers. . . .

The Battle of Britain may not be over, but its issue is, I believe, already decided. . . . It is still too early to say whether the much heralded invasion is still to be attempted or not. Two things can, however, already be said with confidence. One is that if attempted it will be a failure. The second is that if abandoned it will be no less a failure. In either case it will mark the definite turn of the tide of this war. Abandonment would be not only a terrible blow to Hitler's prestige, but all the gigantic effort put into getting where he wanted to be in order to launch his attack will have been largely wasted. I believe that this invasion by its failure, in whichever way it fails, will in large measure make Dead Sea fruit of all his previous victories.

FRENCH COLONIES RALLY TO 'FREE FRANCE'

On June 23, 1940, General de Gaulle, former Under-Secretary for War, announced the formation in London of the French National Committee, soon to be the rallying-point of French patriots from all the world over. We give here extracts from three speeches broadcast by this energetic leader who raised the ' Free French ' standard, and a communiqué from his London headquarters.

GENERAL DE GAULLE, IN A WORLD BROADCAST, AUGUST 22, 1940:

FRANCE, at the orders of a senile Marshal, laid down her arms two months ago. By means of this surrender the enemy and the men of Vichy undertook to make the French people believe that all was lost. The enemy and the men of Vichy undertook to make us believe that we had to be resigned and to submit to punishment with humility or, as they say at Vichy, with discipline. For the enemy the Vichy Government had, moreover, another part to play —forcing the capitulation of those people in the French Empire who wished to go on fighting. In this way, Hitler's eagle and Mussolini's vulture could easily settle on Casablanca, Tunis, Lake Chad, Dakar, Djibuti and Beirut. At this moment 800 aeroplanes, the mainstay of our African defence, are leaving Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia to be taken to Istres [near Marseilles] and put at the disposal of the enemy.

In order that this appalling task should be accomplished, and that the keys of our Empire should be handed over, the enemy and his accomplices had a stroke of genius. It consisted in putting the great military leaders who had been beaten in command. And they, demoralized by their own defeat, have become the best means of ensuring that the Armistice terms should be carried out. . . .

I say that these men, if they formerly served France, are betraying her today. I say that these soldiers are no longer soldiers, that these Frenchmen are no longer Frenchmen, and that these men are no longer men. But I say also that their behaviour is as absurd as it is dishonourable. I say that what today they call their politics are just as all-calculated as what yesterday they called their strategy. I say, because I see it, that our Ally, Great Britain, is growing daily stronger and richer. I say, because I know it, that an irresistible current is bearing the New World towards the rescuing arms of liberty. I say, because that is what I am now endeavouring to foster, that the strength of France is beginning to revive. Among all the enemy aeroplanes which have crashed during these past few days, those which we ourselves have brought down are witnesses to this.

Good sense, wisdom, and even skill are on the side of honour. We shall soon see, as we have always seen, that for France nothing is more sensible than to fight.

GENERAL DE GAULLE, IN A WORLD BROADCAST, AUGUST 29:

ON August 26 the Territory of Chad rallied to the Free French Forces under the leadership of its Governor and its Military Commandant. On August 27 the Cameroons, in an immense gesture of faith, order and discipline, placed themselves of their own accord under the direction of my representatives who have directly assumed the administration of the French Mandate and the command of the troops. Yesterday, August 28, at Brazzaville, capital of French Equatorial Africa, my representatives, acclaimed by the whole population and welcomed by all the troops, took the civil and military power in hand.

Thus, menaced by the covetousness of the German and Italian enemy and placed by the detestable Armistice in an economic situation for which there was no outlet, the whole of the colonies of our Equatorial Africa have re-entered the war. This vast and valiant part of French territory has decided to defend itself and will be defended.

In this total world war, in this war where everything counts, the French Empire is a bundle of absolutely vital forces. By the geographical and strategic situation of her colonies in every part of the world, by their teeming populations, by their vast resources, there still remain to France several important trumps in this war in which her destiny is at stake. The crime of the Armistice lies in having capitulated as though France had no Empire, in having disregarded the immense and intact forces which we possess in the Empire; in having disarmed the Empire for the benefit of the enemy. . . .

I call to duty each French territory in the work of national defence. I call the French Army, Navy and Air Force to arms. There is still glory to be gathered for our flags. I call all Frenchmen wherever they may be to the war of honour and liberation. Each one of them must endeavour to harass the enemy by all the active or passive means in his power. We shall not perish. We shall survive. We shall win the war.

COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED FROM FREE FRENCH HEADQUARTERS, LONDON, SEPTEMBER 21:

THE rallying of colonies to Free France—Chad, the Cameroons, French Equatorial Africa, and French Possessions in India and the Pacific—corresponds throughout the world to a magnificent movement in favour of the Free French Forces. This rallying has been carried out by the enthusiasm of the colonial people, who do not wish the French Empire to disintegrate.

The movement has manifested itself first by the enlistment under the flag of France and the emblem of the Cross of Lorraine of Frenchmen of far-off countries, who have placed themselves at the disposal of General de Gaulle after long and often hazardous journeys. Some have arrived from Morocco, from French West Africa, from South America, and from the Pacific. Recently a large group, whose ship had been set on fire by a bomb off the English coast, presented themselves at G.H.Q., dressed in borrowed clothes, tired but resolute, and ready to serve immediately in the Army, Navy or Air Force of the Free French Forces.

This rallying has also manifested itself by the activities of groups of Free Frenchmen throughout the world. The groups which have been spontaneously formed, under the motto " France Quand Même," from the United States to Shanghai and from the Argentine Republic to Egypt, have answered General de Gaulle's appeal and are trying to strengthen the movement of resistance which has already saved the honour of Frenchmen and which will in time ensure the freedom of their country. It has grown so much in a few weeks that Free France can already furnish her Allies with effective support in the coming fight. In Egypt, in particular, troops of the Free French Forces and French airmen have already taken part in the fight against Italian forces.

The Free French Forces, grouped round their chief, General de Gaulle, salute these fighters of the first hour, who, under the Tricolor, have taken up the struggle for the ultimate victory of the Allies.

GENERAL DE GAULLE, IN A BROADCAST TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE, NOVEMBER 20:

WE have now 35,000 trained troops under arms; 20 warships in service; 1,000 airmen; 60 merchant ships at sea; numerous technicians working in armaments; territories in full activity in Africa, French India and the Pacific: increasing financial resources, newspapers and wireless stations. Above all, there is the conviction that we are present every minute in the minds and in the hearts of all French people in France.

We want first to fight; to fight and help to defeat the enemy. And in this victory—this certain victory—we Free Frenchmen want it to be a French victory. That is why we want, little by little, to gather together France and the Empire, even if we should free by force the French people who are prevented from doing their duty by the ghastly ambiguity of subservience to the rulers of betrayal. What we want, after the victory, is the beginning of a new harvest of devotion and public service, disinterestedness and mutual help.

Chapter 120

FREE FRANCE FOUGHT ON AFTER THE FRANCO-GERMAN ARMISTICE

De Gaulle Led the Rally of Free Frenchmen—His Indictment of the Vichy Government—Under the Cross of Lorraine—French Colonies that Refused to Surrender—De Gaulle's Council of Defence—Abortive Expedition to Dakar—De Gaulle at Duala and Fort Lamy—Free French Occupy Lambaréne—Libreville and Port Gentil Taken

On January 26, 1940, an obscure "tank expert" of the French Army, Brigadier-General Charles Joseph Marie de Gaulle, alarmed at France's policy of passive defence, sent a memorandum to General Gamelin, the French Commander-in-Chief, in which he analysed the new warfare, condemned the policy being followed, and foretold the disasters it brought about. Gamelin, routine-minded and impatient of criticism, ignored it.

In 1934, when he was still a colonel, De Gaulle had published a book called "Vers l'Armée de Métier," in which he prophesied accurately the character modern warfare would assume. The book passed almost unnoticed save in Germany, where General Guderian, the German tank expert, was not slow to perceive its excellence and profit by it, to the discomfiture of France in battle.

One man, at least, in France had confidence in General de Gaulle. That man was M. Paul Reynaud, and in June, 1940, while the German offensive was well under way, Reynaud brought De Gaulle into his cabinet and gave him a post at the War Ministry. It was then too late. Reynaud was doomed: the defeatists had gained the upper hand.

Reynaud and De Gaulle

Despite Reynaud's broadcast that France would continue the struggle, from Africa if need be, the men of Vichy who overthrew him repudiated their country's treaty obligations and capitulated to Germany in a manner which showed that some of them, at least, had hoped for some such outcome to the struggle. Fortunately, De Gaulle was at that time on a mission in this country. He refused to be a party to the ignominious surrender. He knew that at the time of the Armistice France still had a large army intact upon the Italian frontier; he knew that the French air force, though outnumbered by the Germans, had not been destroyed; he knew that France's fine Navy was at full strength; he knew that France had vast territories overseas where there were French soldiers and French governments still exercising their functions; above all, he knew that, given the will to do so, France could still continue the struggle from her great overseas territories in cooperation with the British Empire and all its tremendous resources.

Knowing all this, and being not merely a theorist but a soldier who had put his theories to the test in the field (he had carried out the tank operations at Laon, the only successful counter-attack launched by the French, and in a big tank battle at Abbeville had smashed his way ten miles through the Germans), he refused to accept the Vichy government's surrender and remained in England, where he rallied those of his countrymen who were determined to continue the struggle and proclaimed the existence of a Free France.

In a world broadcast on August 12, 1940, General de Gaulle indicted the men of Vichy in scathing terms, and in the course of his speech declared:

"My aim, my sole aim, is to act so that, in spite of momentary desertion, France does



LEADER OF THE FREE FRENCH FORCES

General Charles de Gaulle, seen here on his return to London from the successful expedition to Duala at the end of October, 1940, organized under the flag of Free France those of his countrymen in all parts of the world who were determined to continue the struggle against the Nazis despite the French surrender. *Photo, Wide World*

not stop fighting and that France shall be present at the victory.

"That is why I have recently signed a very important agreement with the British Government. By virtue of this agreement, I, who am at present the leader of Free Frenchmen, undertake to organize a French Force to fight side by side with our Allies. . . . That is what I have done and that is what I set out to do. I am responsible to the French nation in whose service I have placed myself, once for all. The enemy and his Vichy accomplices tax my conduct, and that of the good Frenchmen who have joined me to fight, with treason. Nothing could encourage us more, for nothing shows more clearly that our path is the right one."

The important agreement to which General de Gaulle referred was a memorandum, the text of which had been made public on August 7. It dealt with the organization, employment, and conditions of service of the force of volunteers raised by the General, whose status as leader of all Free Frenchmen, wherever they might be, who rallied to the support of the Allied cause, was recognized by His Majesty's Government.

De Gaulle's Stirring Call

In a further broadcast, addressed specifically to Frenchmen, General de Gaulle announced that he had decided to take under his authority all Frenchmen living in British territory and those who might eventually come to British soil. He called upon generals, officers of the High Command and Governors of Empire to get into touch with him so that their forces could be combined for the salvation of France and French territory.

De Gaulle announced the immediate formation of a French land, sea, and air force, and adopted as its emblem the Cross of Lorraine—the red cross with two bars which centuries ago was the symbol of Lorraine's heroic resistance and which figured on the banner of France's most venerated saint and liberator, Joan of Arc. As leader of the Free French naval forces he appointed Vice-Admiral Muselier (*see* photograph in page 1007).

It was obvious that in France itself, now completely dominated by the Nazis, General de Gaulle's appeal could not be actively answered, but some of the French colonies refused to subscribe to the shameful capitulation and pledged their adherence to the Allied cause. The first to do so was the Chad Territory, in Central Equatorial Africa, a territory 461,000 square miles in area bordering





FREE FRANCE FIGHTS UNDER THE CROSS OF LORRAINE

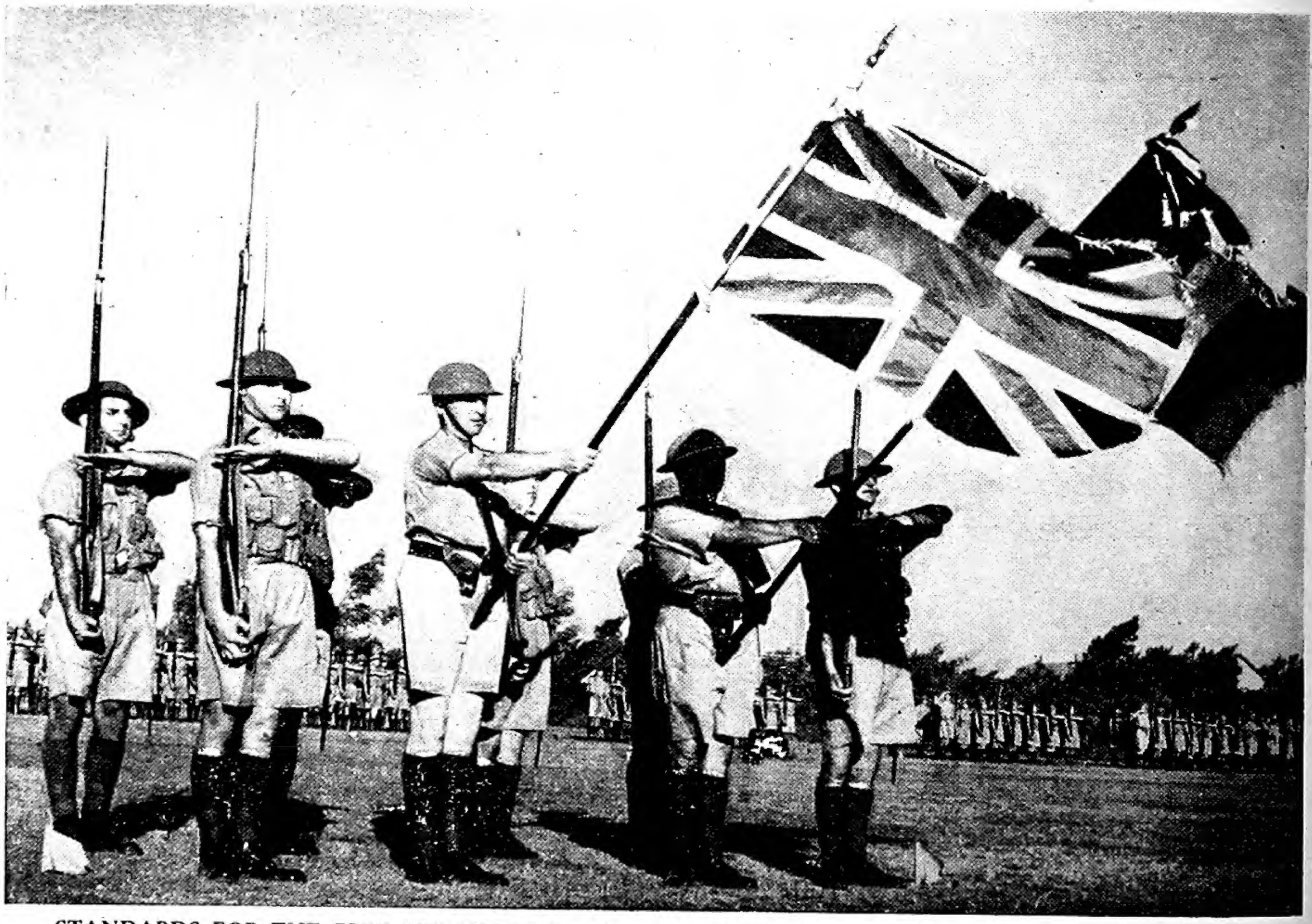
As symbol for the land, sea and air forces which he promptly began to form, General de Gaulle chose the Cross of Lorraine which had been borne by Joan of Arc. The new flag is here seen displayed by men of a French destroyer that came to Britain after the French capitulation. Top, light tanks of the Free French army at exercises in Britain.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright ; Planet News

DE GAULLE AT DAKAR

In September, 1940, General de Gaulle proceeded to Dakar with a small force of the Free French. Certain British naval units stood by. On the morning of September 23, he sent an envoy ashore in a launch (top) to parley with the French Governor-General. The party was fired upon and two officers wounded. Below, left, one is being helped aboard a Free French warship. An attempt to land De Gaulle's troops was prevented by fire from French warships and shore batteries ; some of the damage done by return fire is seen below, right. Convinced that only by a major operation involving much bloodshed to his countrymen could Daker be forced, De Gaulle (seen left in conference with his officers) withdrew.

Paramount Newsreel ; Keytone ; G.P.U.



STANDARDS FOR THE FREE FRENCH LEGION OF THE ORIENT

In August, 1940, there was formed in Egypt a Free French Legion, mainly from units of French Colonial infantry which had refused to follow Vichy in surrendering to the Nazis. Here is seen part of the ceremony when standards—Union Jack and Free French Banner—were presented at Ismailia.

Photo, Keystone

on Libya. Other African colonies followed suit, among them the Cameroons and French Equatorial Africa, as well as various small French possessions in India and in the Pacific, such as New Caledonia. The natural produce of the Cameroons is of particular importance in that it is rich in ground nuts, palm oil, and rubber. Morocco and Syria might have followed suit but for the fact that they were under the power of military rather than civil commanders, and General Noguès in Morocco and General Mittelhauser in Syria were unwilling to lose their commands by opposing the Pétain government.

On August 26, 1940, the first French forces formed in the Middle East to fight for Free France alongside the soldiers of the British Empire were reviewed in Cairo by General Wavell. They consisted mainly of units of French Colonial infantry which had refused to accept the capitulation.

By the beginning of September several eminent Frenchmen had thrown in their lot with the Free French party, among them Generals Catroux, De Larminat, Sice and Legentilhomme, Colonel Leclerc, Captain Lapie and M. André Labarthe. General Georges Catroux had been Governor of French Indo-China. Refusing to carry out the instructions sent to him by the Vichy government, he was superseded by Admiral Decoux. Although an Army Commander, whereas De Gaulle was only a brigadier, Catroux came to London and signed the simple form which made him a servant of Free France under the leadership of his junior.

General de Larminat was the French commander-in-chief in French Equatorial Africa and Colonel Leclerc was Governor and Military Commander of the Cameroons. General Paul Louis Legentilhomme was, at the time of the Armistice, in command of the Allied Forces at Djibuti, and he, too, refused to fall in with Vichy's wishes. Captain Lapie, a distinguished Paris barrister, had joined his colonial regiment on the outbreak of war and fought with distinction in the Foreign Legion at Narvik.

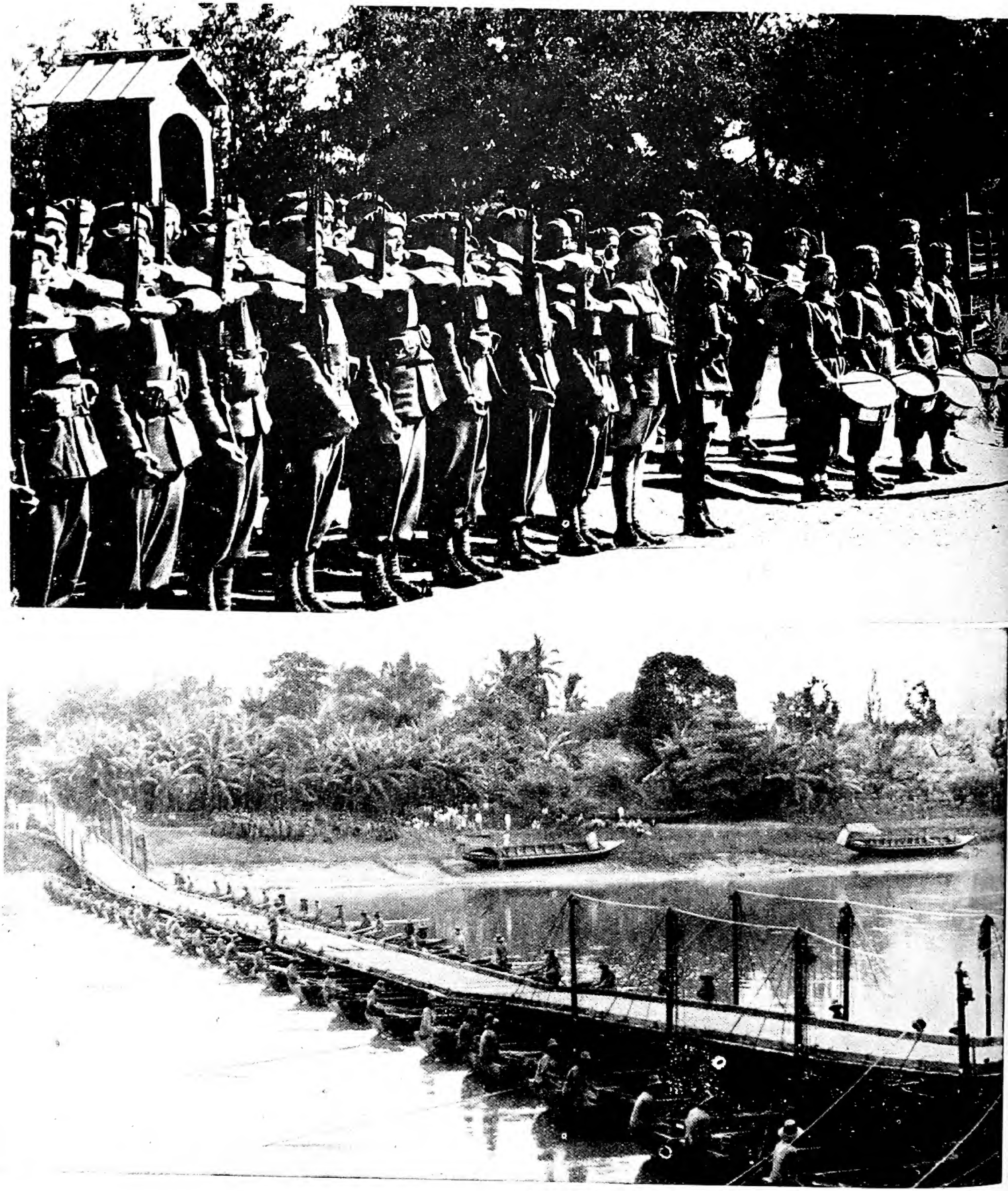
Vice-Admiral Muselier, whom, as previously stated, General de Gaulle appointed to be Commander of the Free French naval and air forces, was a captain in the Fusiliers Marins (somewhat akin to the British Marines) when they played a notable part in the defence of Ypres in 1916, an action in which he was wounded. After that war he commanded the Second Cruiser Squadron of the Mediterranean Fleet and was also in charge of the naval and coast defences at Marseilles. On June 10, 1940, he was at Bordeaux in charge of factories working for national defence. As soon as he heard of the impending armistice he drove at once to Paris and managed to destroy several secret plans and plants in factories before the Germans arrived in the city. He escaped from Paris and went post-haste to Marseilles, making the journey in abandoned private cars, by lorry and even on a fire-engine amid the throng of refugees. On his arrival at Marseilles he rallied several naval officers and men,

Vice-Admiral Muselier



MIDDLE TEMPLE HALL AFTER NAZI RAID OF OCTOBER 16, 1940

The Temple suffered in the enemy raids of September, 1940, and both the Hall and Library of the Inner Temple were damaged. But on the night of October 16 more widespread destruction was wrought. Here is the scene in the famous Middle Temple Hall, dining place of students and benchers. The carved screen and minstrels' gallery had vanished, and there was a great hole in the eastern end of the Hall. Built in 1562–72, the Hall had witnessed the first performance of Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night,' in 1602. *Photo, Central Press*



SUBSTANTIAL AID WAS GIVEN TO BRITAIN BY LOYAL

Under the stimulus of De Gaulle's example and his own untiring efforts the army of Free France quickly increased. On August 24, 1940, H.M. the King inspected the Free French Forces, and is seen, top, arriving at a camp in southern England. On his left is General de Gaulle. At the left of the photograph are Chasseurs Alpins, who took part in the operations in Norway. In the Netherlands East Indies the Dutch authorities were



LDIERS OF THE COUNTRIES OVERRUN BY THE NAZIS

wholeheartedly in favour of resistance to German aggression, and speeded up the work of defence. Left is a pontoon bridge constructed by pioneers of the Netherlands Indian Army. When the French commander in Syria, General Mittelhauser, ordered the cessation of hostilities at the end of June, 1940, a brigade of Polish troops serving with the French crossed into Palestine to join the British. At right, part of this brigade is seen on the parade ground.

British Official ; Crown Copyright



BALLOON BARRAGE WHICH CHECKED THE NAZI DIVE-BOMBERS

The first Auxiliary Balloon Squadron was formed in May, 1938, and by the outbreak of war there were 44 squadrons in being—a remarkable achievement in the defence of our cities. In September, 1939, the Balloon Squadrons were taken over from the A.A.F. by the Royal Air Force. Later the balloon barrage was adapted for use on ships sailing in convoy (see page 1229). The purpose of the barrage was to foil dive-bombers and other low-flying aircraft by the threat of entanglement with the wire cables that hold the balloons captive. *Photo, Pic*

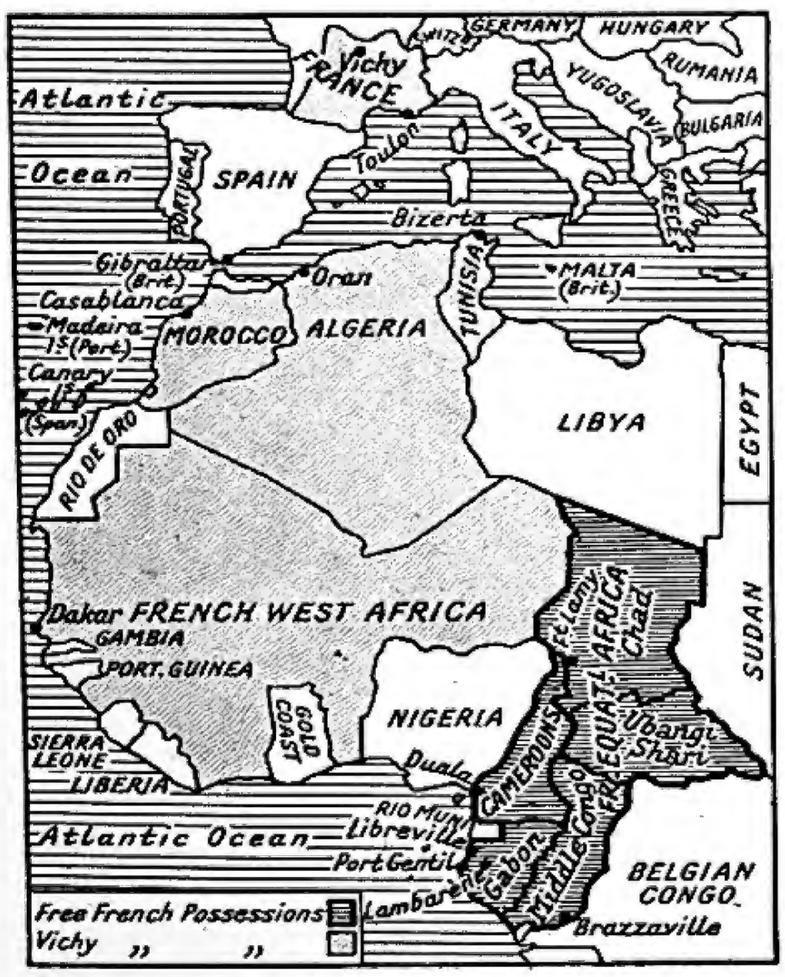
manned a warship and sailed to Gibraltar. Thence he was flown to Britain in an R.A.F. machine and hastened to join forces with De Gaulle.

M. André Labarthe is a technical expert, and on his arrival in England as an adherent to the cause of Free France he was appointed Director-General of all French services connected with armaments and scientific research in Great Britain.

General de Gaulle, having surrounded himself with a number of young and capable men, set up a Council of Defence of the Empire, composed of :

General Catroux, former Governor of Indo-China ;

Vice-Admiral Muselier, Commander-in-Chief of the Free French Navy and Air Force ;



FREE FRENCH COLONIES

This map shows the position in November, 1940. A wedge of Free French territory had been formed bridging Nigeria, the Belgian Congo and the Sudan, while to the North there was contact with Libya.

General de Larminat, Governor-General of French Equatorial Africa ;

M. Eboué, Governor of the Chad Territory ;

M. Sautot, Governor of the French Establishments in the Pacific ;

General Sice, Army Medical Corps in Africa ;

Professor René Cassin, former President of the Ex-Servicemen's Association ;

Rev. Father Thierry d'Argenlieu ; and

Colonel Leclerc, Commissary of the French Cameroons.

At the same time he set to work to create a new army to carry on the fight. His material consisted of French soldiers successfully evacuated from Dunkirk, many of whom were in British hospitals, units of the Chasseurs Alpins and the Foreign Legion brought back from Norway, and Frenchmen who had succeeded in escaping from France and reaching Britain by devious routes. Not until this force was trained and equipped could he turn to the task his hand ached to perform.

His first expedition, unfortunately, was somewhat of a fiasco. From the information which reached him General de Gaulle had reason to believe that a large proportion of the French population of Senegal supported his movement and would welcome his arrival. This information may have been true, but it did not go far enough. General de Gaulle, in proceeding to Dakar with a small force, must have been unaware both of the strength of the defences and of the predominance of pro-Vichy elements.



NOTABLE ADHERENT TO THE FREE FRENCH

General Georges Catroux was Governor of Indo-China until superseded on his refusal to carry out the instructions of the Vichy government. Making his way to London, he joined the Free French army under De Gaulle, who was nominally his junior in rank, and became a member of the Council of Defence.

Photo, L.N.A.

On the morning of September 23, 1940, General de Gaulle's expeditionary force appeared before Dakar. His emissaries, Commanders d'Argenlieu, Gotsch, Bécourt Foch and Perrin, went without weapons in a motor-launch, flying the Tricolor and a white flag, to parley with the authorities. They were fired upon before they could land and Commanders d'Argenlieu and Perrin were dangerously wounded. Later, General de Gaulle having attempted to land his troops peacefully, fire was opened by the Dakar authorities on the French sloops, " Savorgnan de Brazza," " Commandant Duboc " and " Commandant Dominé." Several men were killed and many wounded. Then the fire of the port batteries was directed against British vessels which were standing by to render support if needed.



GENERAL PAUL LOUIS LEGENTILHOMME

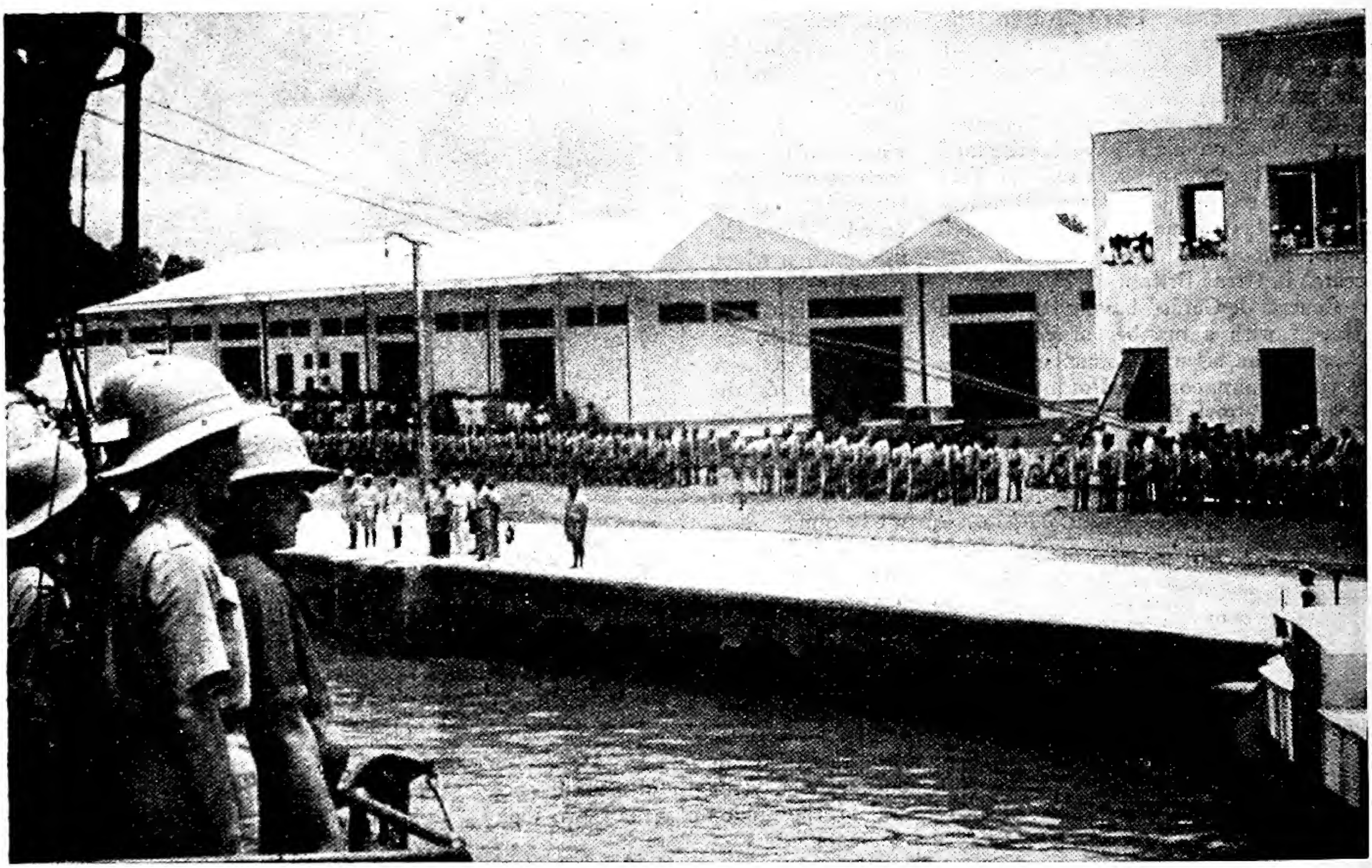
When the French armistice was signed he was in command of the Allied forces based on Djibuti. Refusing to obey the behests of Vichy, he came to London and, like Catroux, joined De Gaulle.

Photo, Planet News

The Admiral commanding was loath to return the fire, and before so doing made the following signal *en clair* ; " Will be compelled to return fire unless fire ceases." As the shore batteries still continued their fire was returned, and when the French battleship " Richelieu " joined hers to those of the coastal batteries a minor engagement developed. Three French submarines left harbour to attack our ships and two of them were sunk. When at last it became obvious that nothing less than a major operation could bring about the fall of Dakar, General de Gaulle, unwilling to be a party to a fight between Frenchmen, withdrew his troops and ships.

Engagement at Dakar

It is certain that Vichy had somehow got wind of the projected expedition, for not only had all those Frenchmen who openly expressed their sympathy



DUALA WELCOMED THE FREE FRENCH LEADER

In October, 1940, De Gaulle visited French African territories which had shown sympathy with the Free French cause. At Duala in the Cameroons he received a warm welcome, and this photograph shows the scene as his expedition came alongside the quay. By the beginning of November the whole wedge of territory from the Gulf of Guinea to the Sudan and the frontier of Libya was in Free French hands. (See map, page 1263.)

Photo, Paramount Newsreel

with the Free French cause been imprisoned by order of the Governor, M. Boisson, shortly before the expedition came in sight, but three cruisers, the "Gloire," "Montcalm" and "Georges Leygues" (*see* illus. page 1107), were dispatched from Toulon to Dakar. The disappointing fashion in which this expedition petered out was a sad blow to the partisans of Free France throughout the world.

Fortunately De Gaulle recovered from this check to his prestige in Africa by successes elsewhere. In October he set out on a tour of those French possessions which had shown their desire to link themselves to his cause. On October the 9th he arrived at Duala, capital of the French Cameroons, where he was warmly greeted by Colonel Leclerc, the Governor of the Colony, who assured him of the loyalty of the population.

Duala, chief port of the country, is a place of great potentialities. It can dock ships up to the size of 10,000 tons. It is connected by railway with Yaounde and with N'kongsamba, close to the Nigerian frontier. There is also a good road system, which extends to the boundaries of the Province and affords easy communication with Chad.

On October 22 the General reviewed a contingent of Free French forces in French Equatorial Africa and had a long conference with General Catroux at Fort Lamy in the Chad. This was the prelude to a fresh move. Libreville, Lambarène and Port Gentil in the Gabon colony of French Equatorial Africa were still centres of resistance by Vichy supporters, the last remaining centres in that area. At the beginning of November General de Gaulle's headquarters announced that despite the will of the population the garrison at Lambarène, under pressure from Vichy, had declared their opposition to Free France and had established a line of communication covering Libreville.

But resistance there was not of long duration. Towards the end of the first week of November Free French forces under General de Larminat had occupied Lambarène, on November 10 Libreville surrendered, and on November 17 Port Gentil fell into the hands of the Free French. Thus the whole wedge of territory from the Gulf of Guinea to the borders of Libya and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan was in the hands of Free France. So far, however, General de Gaulle's forces had played no part in major military operations. But their chance was soon to come.



GOVERNOR OF CHAD TERRITORY

M. Félix Sylvestre Eboué, Governor of the Chad Territory in Equatorial Africa, was the first colonial governor to declare for De Gaulle. He became a member of the Council of Defence in August, 1940.

ILL-FATED EXPEDITION TO DAKAR

At the head of a Free French Force, accompanied by British naval units, General de Gaulle appeared off the French colonial port of Dakar on September 23, 1940. But his reception was hostile, and the expedition was soon withdrawn. We give here statements of the Free French military and naval leaders, followed by Mr. Churchill's explanation of the part played by the Royal Navy in this unfortunate enterprise.

COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED BY GENERAL DE GAULLE'S HEADQUARTERS, SEPTEMBER 24, 1940:

CALLED to Dakar by numerous Frenchmen anxious to fight at his side, General de Gaulle appeared with French soldiers and sailors before the fortress. The naval authorities at Dakar ordered fire to be opened on General de Gaulle's emissaries, who had come without weapons in a motor-launch, flying the Tricolor and the white flag of truce. These emissaries were Commander d'Argenlieu, Commander Gotsch, Commander Bécourt Foch, and Commander Perrin. Commander d'Argenlieu and Commander Perrin were seriously wounded.

Later, General de Gaulle having attempted to land his troops peacefully, fire was opened by the Dakar authorities on the French sloops "Savorgnan de Brazza," "Commandant Duboc," and "Commandant Dominé." Several men were killed and many were wounded. General de Gaulle then withdrew his troops and ships, not wishing to be a party to a fight between Frenchmen.

The operations decided upon to prevent French West Africa from falling under German control are continuing, and it may confidently be expected that, thanks to the determination of General de Gaulle and to the patriotism of the military and civilian population, they will lead finally to the rallying of French West Africa to the flag of Free France.

ADMIRAL MUSELIER, HEAD OF THE FREE FRENCH NAVY, IN A WORLD BROADCAST, OCTOBER 2:

HITHERTO I have preserved the most rigorous silence concerning the acts of Marshal Pétain's Government, as I still hoped that he would go down to history solely as the victor of Verdun. But since this Government has given orders to fire upon our emissaries at Dakar, on our chaplain, Commander d'Argenlieu, and on Marshal Foch's grandson, since it has had our ships machine-gunned and our patriots illegally tried, I feel myself obliged to speak.

First of all, I defy anyone to prove that any of my officers or of my sailors are in the pay of a foreign Power, or are acting against their country, any more than I am myself. So far as our action against France is concerned I wish to emphasize that our ships and our sailors at Dakar had orders not to fire against Frenchmen. We prefer to be martyrs rather than assassins.

Admiral Darlan, at the end of May you had already constituted a Naval Court and had the Captain commanding the Naval Forces at Boulogne condemned to 20 years' penal servitude for having ordered the town to be abandoned before he had exhausted all the means of resistance in his power. And yet a month later you committed a far greater crime. Betraying your promise given to our Allies, you abandoned the fight at a time when our Fleet was intact and its personnel desired nothing more than to continue the fight in order to expel the invader.

On June 19, in a code message which has become historic, you ordered the whole Navy to pursue the fight with their fiercest energy. We know how well the French sailors replied to your appeal, how they left their families and their goods and amid the gravest difficulties made their way to Great Britain and to Africa in the hope of continuing the battle against the enemy. It was then, Admiral Darlan, that you committed the greatest fault that a leader can commit, in commanding the men entrusted to you to lay down their arms. By this sin against the spirit you placed all your subordinates in an odious position, in that their difficulty was not to do their duty but to discover wherein their duty lay. God knows what catastrophes this moral crisis, which you imposed upon us all, has brought. And yet a single word from you would have been enough for all our colonies to have ranged themselves on the side of our Navy, and France, martyred but not beaten, could have continued to fight with honour and to know that this solution would have been the best.

I deplore that French blood should have been spilt in Africa. I deplore equally that Admiral Darlan's fleet should have devoted its energies to the sole end of carrying out Hitler's and Mussolini's orders to fire against French sailors and, the most shameful incident in the history of our Navy, against officers sailing under a flag of truce. This has been the crowning act of ignominy on the part of the man who, after the Armistice, could have been the saviour of the French Navy and of the French Empire, but who, lacking the necessary courage or foresight, will go down to history as the "Admiral who surrendered."

MR. CHURCHILL, IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, OCTOBER 8:

I DO not propose to give the House a detailed account of the episode at Dakar. . . . This operation was primarily French, and although we were ready to give it a measure of support, which in certain circumstances might have been decisive, we were no more anxious than was General de Gaulle to get involved in a lengthy or sanguinary conflict with the Vichy Government. . . .

There is, however, one part of this story on which I should like to reassure the House, as it concerns his Majesty's Government alone and does not affect those with whom we have been working. The whole situation at Dakar was transformed in a most unfavourable manner by the arrival there of the three French cruisers and three destroyers which carried with them a number of Vichy partisans, evidently of a most bitter type. These partisans were sent to overawe the population, to grip the defences, and to see to the efficient manning of the powerful shore batteries. The policy which his Majesty's Government has been pursuing towards the Vichy warships was not to interfere with them unless they appeared to be proceeding to enemy-controlled ports. Obviously, however, while General de Gaulle's enterprise was proceeding it was specially important to prevent any of them reaching Dakar. By a series of accidents and some errors which have been made the subject of disciplinary action or are now subject to formal inquiry, neither the First Sea Lord nor the Cabinet were informed of the approach of these ships to the Straits of Gibraltar until it was too late to stop them passing through.

Orders were instantly given to stop them at Casablanca or, if that failed, to prevent them entering Dakar. If we could not cork them in we could at least, we hoped, have corked them out, but although every effort was made to execute these orders these efforts failed. The Vichy cruisers were, however, prevented from carrying out their further purpose of attacking the Free French colony of Duala; and of the four French vessels concerned two succeeded in regaining Dakar, while two were overtaken by our cruisers and induced to return to Casablanca without any actual violence. . . .

The fighting which ensued between the shore batteries at Dakar, reinforced by the 16-inch guns of the damaged "Richelieu," and the British squadron was pretty stiff. Two Vichy submarines which attacked the Fleet were sunk, the crew of one being happily saved. Two of the French destroyers were set on fire and one of the cruisers was heavily hit and the "Richelieu" herself suffered further damage. On our part we had two ships, one a battleship and the other a light cruiser, which suffered damage.

What an irony of fate it is that this fine French Navy which Admiral Darlan shaped for so many years to fight in the common cause against German aggression should now be employed as the tool of German and Italian masters whose policy contemplates not merely the defeat and mutilation of France but her final destruction as a great nation!

Diary of the War

OCTOBER, 1940

October 1, 1940. R.A.F. bomb Berlin, targets in the Ruhr and aerodromes and bases along coasts. Bombs fall by day on London and two Welsh coastal towns. Night raiders attack London, Merseyside and Midlands town. Enemy lose five 'planes, Britain three. Liner "Highland Patriot" sunk.

October 2. C.-in-C. Mediterranean reports that British naval forces carried out sweep in eastern and central Mediterranean from Sept. 29 to Oct. 2. R.A.F. bomb German oil plants, goods yards and aerodromes, docks and shipping. Many daylight attacks on London and S.E. coastal towns. Widespread night raids. Enemy lose 10 aircraft.

October 3. Day raids on Rotterdam, Dunkirk and Cherbourg. Enemy drop bombs at random during day raids over London, Thames valley and elsewhere. Small-scale night raids.

October 4. Admiralty announce recent destruction of seven German and two Italian U-boats. Single enemy aircraft bomb central and north London, and S.E. coastal town. Small-scale night attack on London. Enemy lose three aircraft, Britain one.

October 5. Sir Charles Portal appointed head of R.A.F. Air battles over Kent and Sussex coasts. Heavy night attacks on London and adjacent areas. Enemy lose 23 aircraft, Britain nine. R.A.F. bomb targets in the Ruhr, Brest harbour and barges at Gravelines. Raids on Benghazi, Tobruk and Bardia.

October 6. Daylight raids on nearly 20 places in Home Counties. Two raiders shot down. R.A.F. bomb ports of Ostend, Calais and Boulogne, barges at Dutch bases, and sink armed merchant vessel.

October 7. Mass day attacks on Britain, including five on London. Night raids on London, Liverpool and other districts. Nazis lose 27 aircraft, Britain 16. Strong forces of R.A.F. make night raid on Berlin, bombing power stations.

October 8. Dive-bombers make morning attack on Central London, and another raid at night. Eight enemy aircraft destroyed; Britain loses two. R.A.F. attack Boulogne and Lorient by day, and Bremen, Wilhelmshaven and many other targets at night. Bombing raids on Bardia, Sollum and Assab.

October 9. Enemy fighter-bombers do damage in Kent and Sussex and some reach London. At night London suffers 12-hour destructive raid, bombs falling in 40 districts. Enemy lose four aircraft, Britain one. R.A.F. bomb oil plant at Homburg, barges and bridges near Helder, Texel aerodrome and shipping at Le Havre, and at night heavily raid targets in the Ruhr and Channel ports.

October 10. Navy bombard Cherbourg by night. R.A.F. heavily attack Calais and gun positions across Straits. Night raids on Hamburg, Hanover, Cologne, Wilhelmshaven, Kiel and Amsterdam. Enemy make day attacks on south-east coastal towns. At night bombs fall in 36 London districts, Merseyside, Wales, Midlands and elsewhere. Five raiders destroyed; Britain also loses five.

October 11. Many R.A.F. raids in Libya and Eritrea. By day enemy drop bombs in Kent, Sussex and Thames Estuary. Night raids on over 50 areas in London and Home Counties, Merseyside and other N.W. towns. Eight raiders destroyed; Britain loses nine fighters. Invasion bases on French coast heavily bombed at night.

October 12. H.M.S. "Ajax" sinks three Italian destroyers in Mediterranean. Cruiser "Liverpool" damaged by aerial torpedo but reaches port. R.A.F. attack Berlin and many industrial targets in Germany and Holland. Bardia and Tobruk raided. Heavy night raids on London and a Midland town. Enemy lose 11 aircraft, Britain ten.

October 13. Day raids over Kent and London. At night 36 London districts are bombed and 20 provincial areas. Two enemy and two British aircraft lost. R.A.F. raid Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, targets in Ruhr, and Zeebrugge Mole.

October 14. Small-scale enemy activity over Britain during day. Night raids continuous and heavy over London, Liverpool and elsewhere. R.A.F. bomb Berlin, Stettin, Hamburg and Hanover.

October 15. Announced that British submarines have sunk two armed merchant and two supply ships in Mediterranean. Dunkirk bombarded by Navy. R.A.F. bomb Kiel, Hamburg, Boulogne, Flushing, Lorient and Brest. Many daylight attacks over S.E. England. Heavy night raid on London. Nazis lose 18 aircraft, Britain 15.

October 16. Admiralty announce destruction of three German supply ships and two escort vessels. Successful raids on Kiel, Hamburg, Bremen, Cuxhaven and Leuna. Indiscriminate night bombing over London, Liverpool, Wales and S.E. and S.W. England. Six raiders down.

October 17. Navy engage four enemy destroyers 100 miles S.W. of Land's End, but they escape under darkness. Day attack on power station at Brest. Bombs fall during day in S.E. England. Canterbury damaged. Longest night raid on London. Vice-Admiral Tovey appointed C.-in-C. Home Fleet.

October 18. Night raids by R.A.F. on Kiel, Hamburg and targets in the Ruhr. Bombing attacks continue on Italian bases in Libya and Rhodes. Bombs fall by day in S.E. England and Scotland. London raided at night.

October 19. Enemy make three main attacks at night—against London, Midlands and towns in north-west. Two raiders destroyed. Many successful operations by R.A.F. on African fronts and in Dodecanese Islands.

October 20. Berlin raided twice during night. Other targets are Hamburg, Wilhelmshaven, Essen, and plants at Milan, Turin and Aosta. Nazis lose seven aircraft over Britain.

October 21. Two Italian destroyers attack British convoy in Red Sea; one sunk by H.M.S. "Kimberley." R.A.F. raid Boulogne and Gravelines. Night attack on Hamburg and other targets. Bombs fall by day on London, Midlands and N.W. England. Heavy night attack on Merseyside. Four raiders down.

October 22. Italian aircraft attack Perim, in Straits of Bab el Mandeb. Fierce air fight over Kent. At night raiders reach London and Midlands. Three enemy 'planes destroyed; Britain loses six. Hitler receives Laval in France.

October 23. H.M. minesweeper "Dundalk" reported sunk. R.A.F. bomb Berlin, Emden, Magdeburg, Hanover and other targets. Two supply ships torpedoed by Beaufort aircraft. Night bombers make gliding raids on London.

October 24. R.A.F. attack Ostend, Gravelines, Calais and convoy off Zeebrugge. Night raids on Berlin, Hamburg, Hanover, docks and shipping in Germany and occupied countries. Bombs fall by day in London area and S. England.

October 25. German torpedo-boat and Italian supply ship reported sunk by British submarines. H.M. destroyer "Venetia" reported sunk. Violent engagement with heavy shore guns and British and German bombers centres round British convoy approaching Straits. No ship receives direct hit. R.A.F. attack Kiel, Bremen, Cuxhaven, Amsterdam and other places. Bombs fall by day on London. Widespread night raids. Enemy lose 17 aircraft, Britain 10.

October 26. "Empress of Britain" sunk by bombing. Enemy supply ship sunk off Norway. Day raiders bomb London shopping centre. Main night attacks directed on London and Midlands. Enemy lose six aircraft, Britain two. R.A.F. bomb Berlin, Stettin, Leuna, Cologne, docks, ports and aerodromes.

October 27. Bombs fall by day on London, places in S.E. England and in Hants. Main night attack on N.W. and Midlands. Enemy lose 10 aircraft, Britain eight. R.A.F. bomb Skoda works at Pilsen and many targets in Germany.

October 28. Italy invades Greece across Albanian border. R.A.F. bomb German naval bases, oil depots, railway centres and 19 aerodromes. Night raids on London, Merseyside, N.E. England and Midlands. Enemy lose four aircraft.

October 29. Greeks holding positions against Italians. R.A.F. bomb Berlin, docks and shipyards, railways and aerodromes. Four day attacks on S.E. and London; three on Portsmouth area. Night raids on London and Merseyside. Enemy lose 30 aircraft, Britain seven.

October 30. Day attack on Cherbourg. Night raids on Antwerp, Flushing and Emden. Bombs on London and Midlands. Enemy lose nine aircraft, Britain five.

October 31. Slight Italian advance down west coast of Greece. First R.A.F. raid on Naples. Fierce air battle over Mersa Matruh. Minor raids over Britain.

Chapter 121

BRITAIN'S OTHER ALLIES: CZECHS, POLES, BELGIANS, DUTCH, AND NORWEGIANS

Czech Legion in Britain—Technical Aid in Armaments Production—Polish Airmen in the Battle of Britain—Dilemma of the Belgian Cabinet : Leading Ministers Come to Britain—Policy of Free Belgians—Congo Holds Firm—Belgian Pilots in the R.A.F.—Norwegian Naval Units—Position of Denmark—Danish Volunteers with the British Forces—Dutch Government in London—The Netherlands Indies—Fine Work of Dutch Sailors

In the measure of their ability, Britain's other Allies—Czechs, Poles, Norwegians, Dutch and Belgians—made their contribution to the common cause. Some of them brought considerable assets in the shape of gold, ships and fighting men to Great Britain. Some had valuable colonies. The least tangible asset but perhaps ultimately to prove the greatest contribution on their part to victory was the goodwill of millions of their countrymen living under the Nazi yoke. In the statesmen of Britain's foreign Allies the Empire had a very potent propaganda weapon, the effect of which was felt not only in Europe but also in the U.S.A., with its huge cosmopolitan population.

Of the Czech army little remained after the overrunning of France. In France the Czech Legion, composed of soldiers who had escaped from Czechoslovakia and Czech citizens recruited in France, fought valiantly. Two regiments, the 1st and 2nd, after a gallant rearguard action from the Loire managed to reach England. With other Czech soldiers they formed the nucleus of a new Czech Legion on British soil, constituted under a comprehensive military agreement between Britain and the Provisional Czech Government. The re-equipment and organization of this Legion was one of the first tasks of the Provisional Government, which established its H.Q. in London in July, 1940, under the Presidency of Dr. Benes.

Other Czech soldiers and pilots succeeded, after hazardous journeys through unoccupied countries, in reaching the Near East, where they swelled the cosmopolitan ranks of the forces under General Sir Archibald Wavell.

Re-equipment was already so far advanced in August, 1940, that Czech air squadrons were able to take part in the Battle of Britain. One Czech unit alone destroyed 38 enemy aircraft. The Czech airmen went into action with one date in their minds—March 10, 1939—when Hitler had overrun Czechoslovakia. September 15, 1940, was memorable for Czech airmen. On that day they brought down 15 Nazi aircraft over England. Czech bomber crews in September attacked the railway goods yard at Brussels and also took part in other cross-Channel operations.

Czech citizens in Britain—mostly skilled craftsmen not mobilized for the military services—went to work in the war factories. The technical staff of a large Bren gun factory in Britain consisted entirely of Czechs who had succeeded in escaping from Czechoslovakia after the German occupation. Mr. Edvard Outrata, Czechoslovak Defence Minister and former Managing Director of his country's great Bren gun factory, brought his secrets and his technical collaborators to England when the Germans became too inquisitive.

When Goering, appalled by his heavy air losses, temporarily abandoned the daylight Battle of Britain in the autumn of 1940, the Poles, more than any other British Ally, could claim a decisive role in our victory. Their courage and dash was proved hundreds of times in the air, on land and at sea. Consumed with intense hatred for the persecutors of

PRESIDENT OF THE PROVISIONAL CZECH GOVERNMENT IN BRITAIN

On July 23, 1940, Britain recognized the Czech National Committee as the Provisional Czech Government and concluded with it a comprehensive military agreement. Here the President, Dr. Edvard Benes, is visiting Czech troops at a camp in Britain.

Photo, Wide World





CZECH FIGHTER PILOT

Czech airmen were formed into a bomber and a fighter squadron of the Royal Air Force in time to take part in the Battle of Britain. The fighter squadron shot down seven Messerschmitt Jaguars and a Dornier 215 in a single engagement. Above, one of the Czech fighter pilots with the squadron mascot.

Photo, British Official; Crown Copyright

their countrymen, eager to avenge the pitiful French collapse and imbued with reckless spirit and scorn of death which has always been a characteristic of the Polish race, the Poles earned the highest tributes from their British and other comrades in arms. Polish fighter and bomber pilots managed to get to Britain with no considerable losses after the French collapse. They were quick to appreciate the quality of the Spitfires, Hurricanes and Blenheims placed at their disposal. Within a few weeks of being ranged in operational units with the R.A.F. they had accounted for more than 500 German machines.

The Poles well and truly avenged the bombardment of Warsaw. Of their Nazi victims, 109 machines were claimed by the famous Polish Squadron No. 303, named after the great Polish national hero, Kosciusko. The thrilling narratives of Polish pilots relieve for the reader what might otherwise be a monotonous series of triumphs. Their successes began on August 8 with two Messerschmitts shot down. On September 1 a Polish sergeant-pilot destroyed five German 'planes in one day. On September 5 the Poles shot down 12 German machines; the next day, eight; and on the following day, in an air battle over London, 11 German 'planes fell to their guns in the morning and another 13 in the afternoon. On September 26 the Tadeusz Kosciusko squadron brought down 13 out of 34 German Heinkels. King George was present at the Polish fighter base when the pilots took off.

Polish Airmen's Vengeance

Well did the Poles deserve the tribute of a British pilot: "They are great lads"; and that of a British Squadron-Leader taking Polish airmen into the fray, who declared: "These Poles are so brave. One feels ashamed to have nerves." Typical of the Polish spirit is this story of a wounded pilot.

"We found a formation of German bombers with an escort of fighters. We went into the attack. I hit one of the bombers. It caught fire and went down. I saw it slowly break up in the air. I still had some ammunition left and did not like the idea of returning to my base with it. A little later I saw nine German bombers. I sailed in and damaged one of them. But he did not go down and I thought it a pity to leave him in uncertainty, for he might manage to limp back to his base. So I attacked him a second time and polished him off. Then I was hit myself."

Another pilot, failing to shoot down the enemy, opened out and drove straight at the German. The two machines locked and crashed. The young Pole died in the ambulance on his way to hospital. His last words were: "But I got him all the same, and it was worth it." There is the story, too, of the heroic Polish doctor attached to No. 303 squadron, who seized a bomb with fuse burning and rushed with it away from a damaged Polish bomber which had just landed, thereby saving the lives of the bomber crew.

As bomber crews the Poles were equally daring and successful. Their special knowledge of German objectives proved of immense value. Whether Berlin or the Ruhr were to be bombed, the Poles were always agog to attack.

The extension of the Polish-British military Agreement to include the formation of a Polish Air Force and bomber force amply justified itself. Well did they live up to the proud words of General Sikorski, the Polish C.-in.-C., when he visited Polish airmen at their stations. He said:

"The terms of the Agreement proposed by us have been accepted in their entirety by His Majesty's Government. They assure us full rights as members of the armed forces of the Polish Republic. Maintaining the splendid tradition of the Polish air force, we shall not betray that trust."

The Polish armed forces meanwhile had little chance of showing their prowess. Many Polish soldiers fell in France and Norway, but 20,000 were evacuated from the southern ports of France alone during the four days June 21 to June 25. They consisted of proven fighting troops from the Brigade of Highland Chasseurs, who had won laurels not only in their country but at Narvik and afterwards in Brittany;



FIRST MEETING OF THE CZECH GOVERNMENT IN LONDON

On August 2, 1940, the Cabinet of the new Czech Government met for the first time. Left to right: Hubert Ripka, Foreign Secretary; George Slavik, Minister of Interior; Frantisek Nemec, Minister for Social Welfare; Jan Becko, Secretary for Social Welfare; Mgr. Jan Shramek (standing), Premier; Maj.-Gen. Sergej Ingr, Minister for War; Edvard Outrata, Defence Minister; Maj-Gen. Rudolf Viest, Secretary for War; Stefan Osusky, Minister of State; Ladislav Feieraband, Minister of State.

Photo, Central Press

FREE POLAND FIGHTS ON

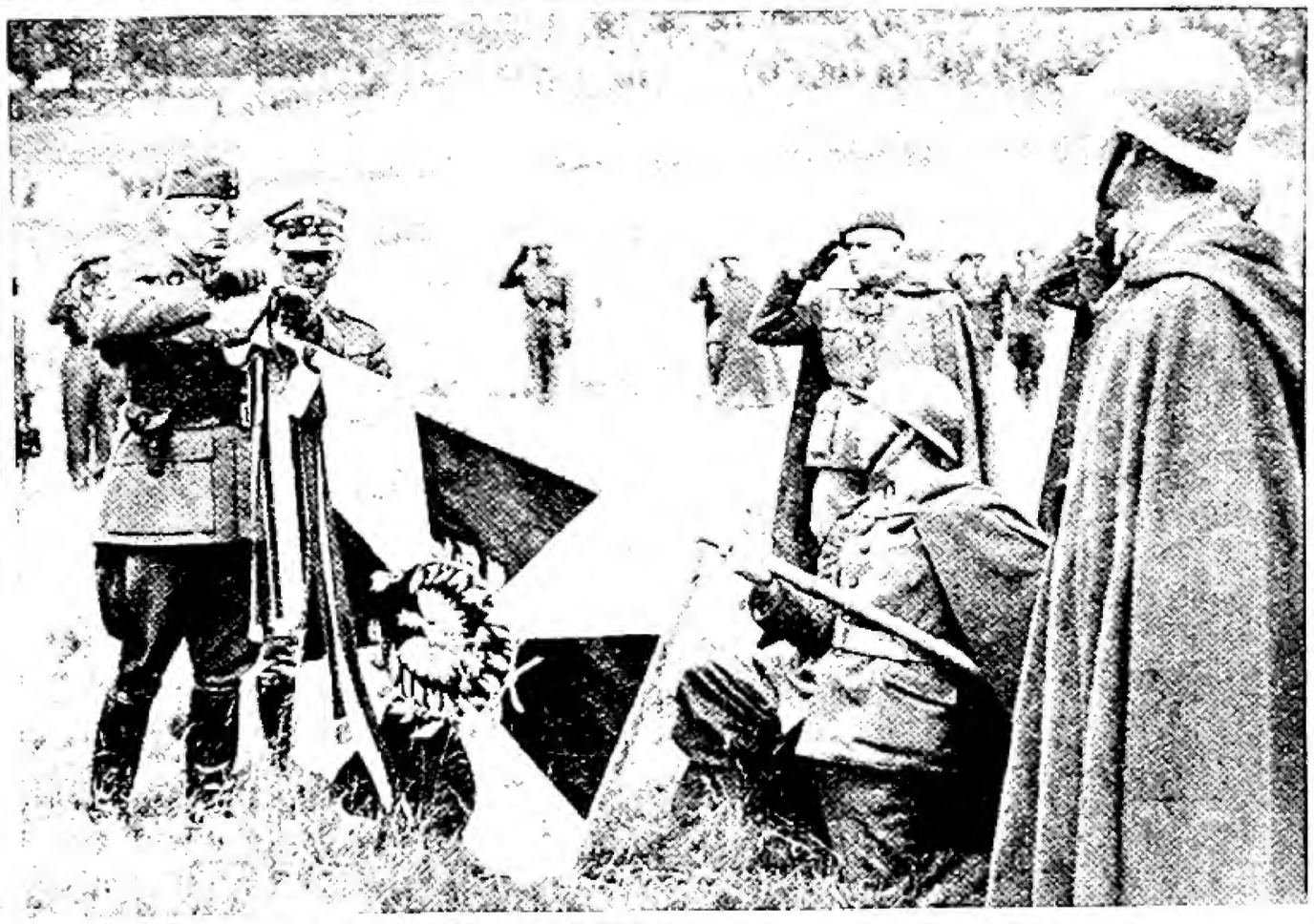
Polish troops fought in Norway, and (1) a unit is seen here going into action ; 3,000 of them attacked 5,000 Germans at Narvik. In July General Sikorski, their C.-in-C., decorated the standard of the Polish Highland Brigade (3), which meanwhile had seen service also in France. A Polish squadron of the R.A.F. shot down 109 German aircraft during September, 1940 ; in (2) a sergeant-pilot is reporting to the station intelligence officer. President Rackiewicz (4), is seen aboard the Polish Navy's depot ship 'Gdynia' at a British port.

Photos, Polish Ministry of Information ; Central Press ; Planet News ; G.P.U.





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there was the First Division of Grenadiers, of whom the Commander of the 20th Army Corps of the Fourth French Army said : " If the French High Command had possessed ten divisions of the same quality, there would have been no defeat " ; also the Second Division of Chasseurs and the Motor Armoured Brigade, which saved not only itself but most of its equipment and brought it to Britain, after fighting a way through both Germans and French who wished to disarm them.

National status was awarded the Poles in an agreement signed by Mr. Winston Churchill and the Polish Prime Minister, General Sikorski, providing for the organization of the Polish armed forces as an entity and reaffirming the determination of both Governments to prosecute the war to a successful conclusion.

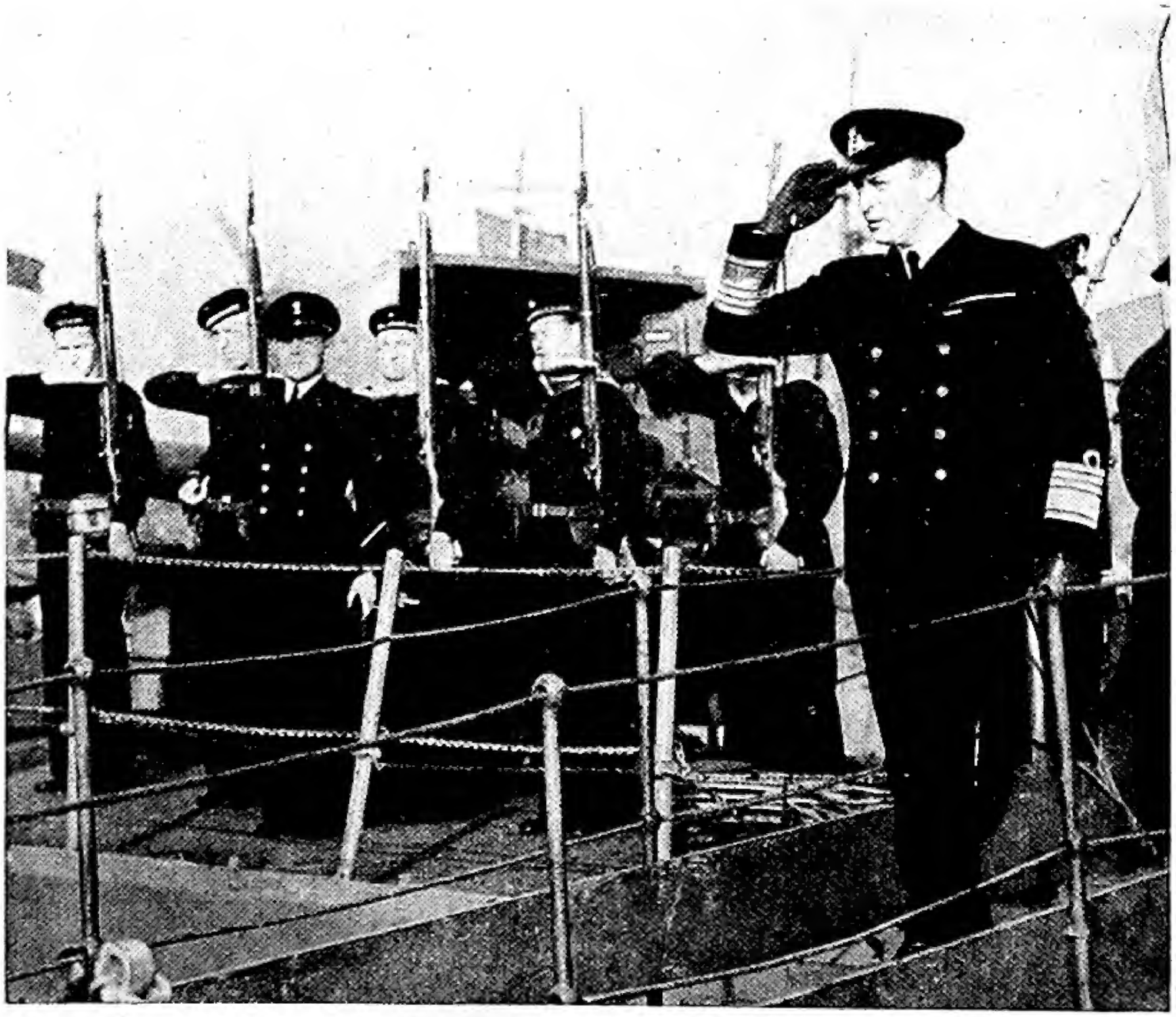
While Polish airmen fought in the skies over Britain, the Polish Navy, its losses in Norway made up by gifts of vessels from the British Navy, carried out with courage and persistence its allotted patrol and convoy tasks. A Polish ship made a daring escape from Vichy-controlled Dakar. In fighting off raiders, destroying U-boats and pursuing the enemy wherever he was to be found, the Poles were never backward.

Twenty-five thousand seamen and 9,000 vessels, with a total tonnage of 4,000,000—this was Norway's most important contribution to the Allied cause. Norway, like Poland and Holland, succeeded in removing her gold reserve at the time of the German invasion and was able to pay all the expenses of her military, naval and administrative services from her own resources. At the end of November, 1940, Hr. Johan Nygaardsvold, the Norwegian Premier in London, was able proudly to declare that the nucleus of a new Norwegian army, with modern equipment, and a new Norwegian navy, with a larger number of sea-going vessels than at any time before, and a modern Norwegian Air Force, with fighters and bombers, had been created. Norwegians in Canada got together to form an Air Force unit, and Norwegian naval men under Norwegian command were active in the North Sea in small fast motor torpedo boats, and whale-catchers armed and incorporated in the Navy. Some of the 50 destroyers supplied to Britain by the United States were also manned by Norwegian sailors. Norway bore her full share of losses from attacks by Nazi 'planes, submarines and surface craft. Especially regrettable was the loss of Norway's largest liner, the " Oslo Fiord," 18,673 tons, which was sunk by a mine off Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Relations with Denmark

The position of Denmark as regards the common cause was somewhat peculiar. Of Denmark's 700 steamers, 126 were under French and British flags soon after the invasion of Denmark. Many others were added to this number through negotiation with Danish shipowners in Britain and the United States. Many Danish volunteers were serving in the British armed forces.

Perhaps the best definition of Denmark's relations with the Allies was that given some time later by Mr. Butler, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. He said : " H.M. Government cannot maintain diplomatic relations with the Danish Government since that Government were under enemy control. Furthermore, H.M. own representatives had been expelled from Denmark. Meanwhile, the Danish Minister in London continued to have diplomatic privileges and could act in a semi-official capacity." This did not alter the fact that many Danes, including some three to four thousand seamen, were serving willingly under the British flag ; while hopes for the formation of an independent Danish Government among prominent Danes outside Denmark were strongly entertained in some quarters.



A DESTROYER OF THE FREE NORWEGIAN NAVY

Crown Prince Olaf is here seen leaving a Norwegian destroyer after a visit of inspection. By the end of November, 1940, there was in active cooperation with the Royal Navy a large number of Norwegian naval units, including many small patrol craft and anti-submarine vessels. Some of the destroyers taken over from the United States were manned by Norwegians.

Photo. British Official : Crown Copyright

Dutch Government in London

A picturesque sight in London in the autumn of 1940 was the Dutch Marèchaussée police, in their dark-blue brocaded uniforms, guarding Queen Wilhelmina's Government, which occupied the four floors of Stratton House, Piccadilly. This building was a Hague in miniature. Holland had rescued intact most of her immense gold and American dollar reserves, and paid entirely for the equipment and maintenance of her armed forces serving with the Allies. The Dutch land forces, consisting at first of a few hundred soldiers and airmen who had arrived in Britain from Holland, Belgium and France in an exhausted and ill-equipped condition, were speedily transformed into an efficient, magnificently equipped Dutch Legion. Within a few weeks of their arrival Dutch airmen, who, with their steady temperament, proved excellent for shipping patrol work, were earning high praise from the Admiralty. Dutch armed units were entrusted with the guarding of aerodromes and defence sections along the coast, and their numbers increased as ever more Dutch subjects were called up for service.

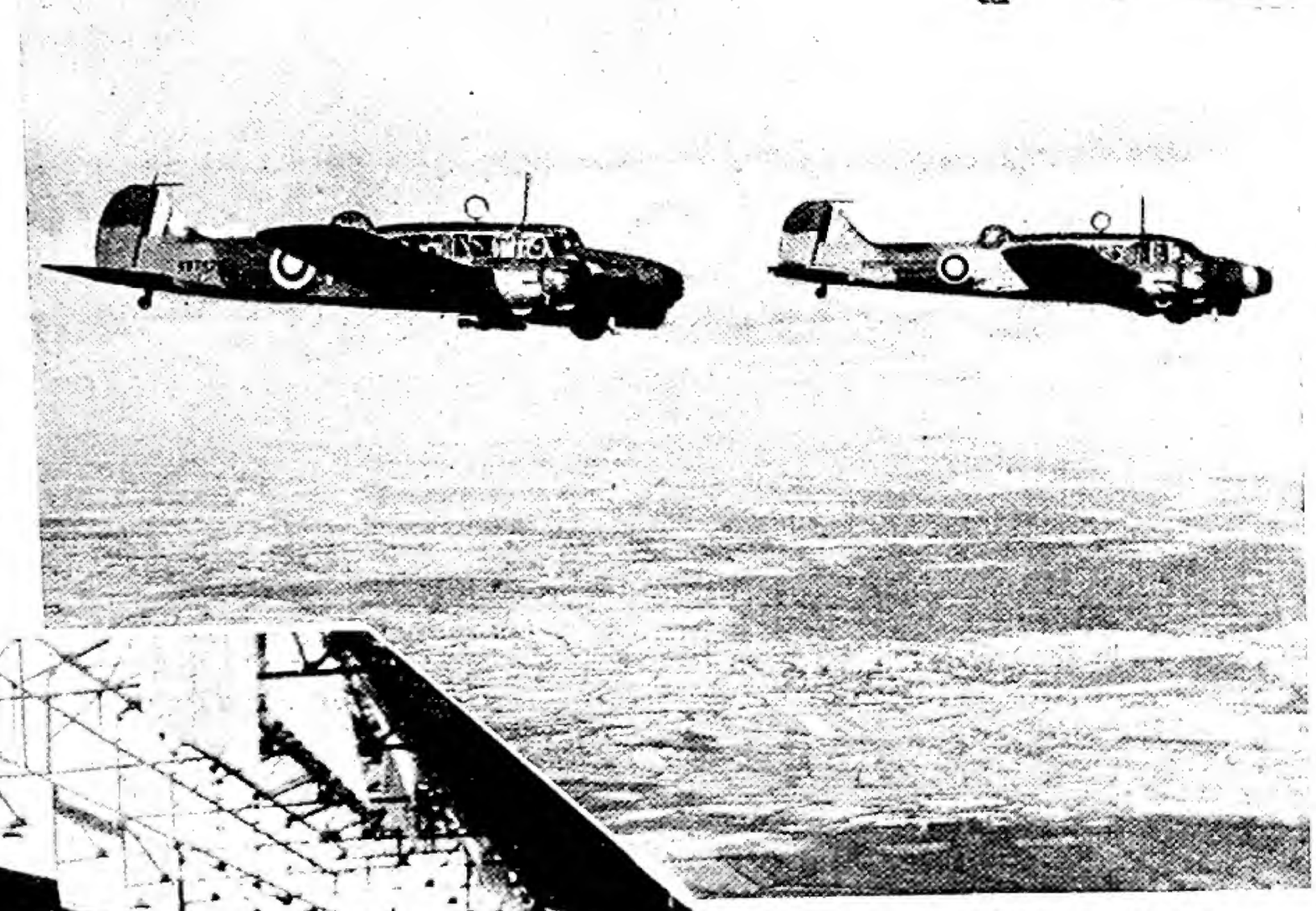
As regards the Navy, three centuries ago the British sailor had no more

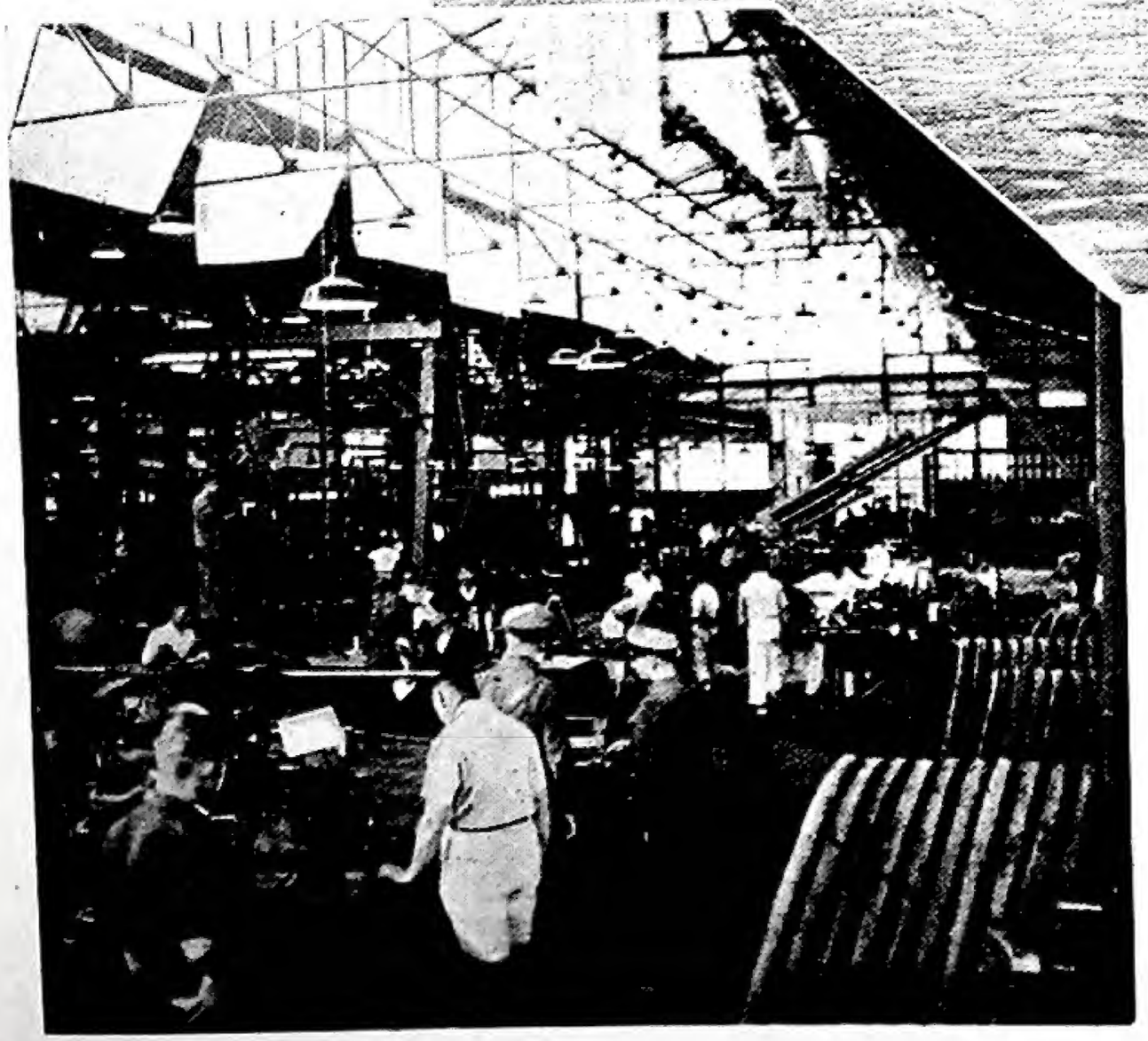
deadly or respected enemy than the Dutch "Jantje" or "Little John," as the people of the Netherlands called their sailors. It took the Nazi invasion to reverse the process and range the White Ensign and the Red, White and Blue of the Netherlands side by side. Details of the Dutch Navy's exploits must await official revelations, but such signals as that sent by the First Lord of the Admiralty in August, 1940, complimenting the Dutch Navy on the "highly dangerous operation they joined us in doing," bear testimony to the quality of their work. Some Dutch warships, like the gallant "Van Galen," which fought off 30 dive-bombing attacks before being sunk, had already gone down in Dutch waters. But after four days' fighting most of the ships of the Royal Dutch Navy, though battle-scarred, were still able to make the crossing to Britain, where they were provided with de-Gaussing and other essential equipment.

Except for an occasional special service like the transporting of Princess Juliana to Canada, the Dutch ships, entirely manned by Dutch crews, were employed in exactly the same way as units of the British Navy—in convoying, mine-sweeping, mine-laying and U-boat hunting. Dutch naval vessels also helped in the evacuation from Dunkirk. The Dutch East Indies Navy was a particularly fine force, comprising the largest and best Dutch warships, and represented a powerful factor in ensuring continued stability in the Far East.

No less important than the help of the Royal Dutch Navy was the contribution of the Dutch merchant marine. Only a small proportion of its 3,000,000 tons of ships fell into German hands, and about 180 deep-sea vessels and over 250 coastal traders were immediately chartered to the Ministry of Shipping. Dutch merchant skippers endured the same trials from U-boat and air attack as British captains. The skipper of one Dutch motor vessel, after losing his leg in a vicious air attack during which a Nazi plane was shot down, continued to encourage the men on his sinking ship and, when lifted on to a rescuing







DUTCH LEGION IN BRITAIN

Soldiers of Holland who escaped to Britain after the Nazi conquest were soon embodied in a finely equipped Dutch Legion. Some of the troops are seen here at English lessons. Airmen from the Netherlands flew Avro Ansons with the R.A.F. (below), while others served with Naval aircraft.

NETHERLANDS INDIES DEFENCES

Though cut off from the mother country, the Dutch East Indies forged ahead in defensive measures which in ensuing months were immensely to strengthen Army, Navy, and Air Force and the supply organizations. Left is a scene in a Java ordnance shop making artillery and range finders.

British Official: Crown Copyright: Planet News



PREMIER OF THE NETHERLANDS

On the resignation, through ill-health, of Jonkheer de Geer in August, 1940, Professor P. S. Gerbrandy (who then held the post of Minister of Justice in Queen Wilhelmina's Government) became Premier of the Netherlands.

Photo, Keystone

British vessel, said : " Do not forget that piece of leg of mine."

The presence of Queen Wilhelmina in London was a great moral factor for the Allies and for the Dutch under German rule. Broadcasting to her people in September, 1940, soon after her sixtieth birthday, Queen Wilhelmina announced a contribution of 5,000,000 guilders by the Dutch East Indies for the Allied struggle. A gift of 40 Spitfires and 18 Lockheed Hudson bombers to the R.A.F. was one result of this. The Queen expressed her resolute faith in an Allied victory. " The Netherlands will rise again. The Netherlands will be free," she declared. Other gifts by the Dutch included £50,000 to the Lord Mayor of London's Fund for Air Raid Victims.

Queen Wilhelmina's Confidence

The Dutch East Indies, which gave Holland 30 per cent of the world's rubber production, 17 per cent of the world's tea, and other valuable raw materials, afforded repeated evidence of their will to win, in spite of economic pressure by Japan. Far from showing signs of collapse, as the Japanese seemed to anticipate would follow the conquest of the mother country, the Dutch East Indies began to build up formidable armed forces. The re-equipment of the army (100,000 strong) went on apace. Orders were placed for large numbers of bombers, fighters and naval flying boats, and it was estimated that the armed forces would be four times stronger before the end of 1941.

Belgian soldiers, seamen and airmen brought to Britain after the French collapse went through a period of torturing indecision in the first weeks, while news was awaited of the fate and future policy of the Belgian Government established in France after the invasion of Belgium. Gradually, however, Belgian Cabinet ministers began to follow the refugees. M. Marcel-Henri Jaspar and M. de Vleeschauwer, Ministers of Health and Colonies respectively, were among the first to arrive in London. They brought news of the immense tasks confronting the remaining members of the Cabinet (headed by M. Pierlot) in France, in dealing with the many hundreds of thousands of Belgian refugees who had fled to unoccupied



SHOT DOWN NAZI BOMBER

Captain Posthumus, of the Dutch motor coaster 'Om Landia,' shot down one of the Nazi bombers that attacked and sunk his ship. His left leg was blown away by a bomb. Rescued by a British vessel, he made a good recovery.

Photo, G.P.U.

France following Hitler's victory over General Weygand. Nor was the attitude of the Vichy Government towards the Pierlot Cabinet clearly defined.

On June 29 M. Jaspar hastened to state his Cabinet's policy.

Exiled Belgian Cabinet

" We entered the war on the side of Great Britain and France and we will lay down our arms only when we have attained all the war aims which we have set ourselves," he declared. He proved to be speaking for the Cabinet as a whole when M. Pierlot, the Premier, and M. Spaak, Foreign Minister, eventually succeeded



BELGIAN LEADERS WHO SUPPORTED BRITAIN IN HER CRUSADE AGAINST THE NAZIS

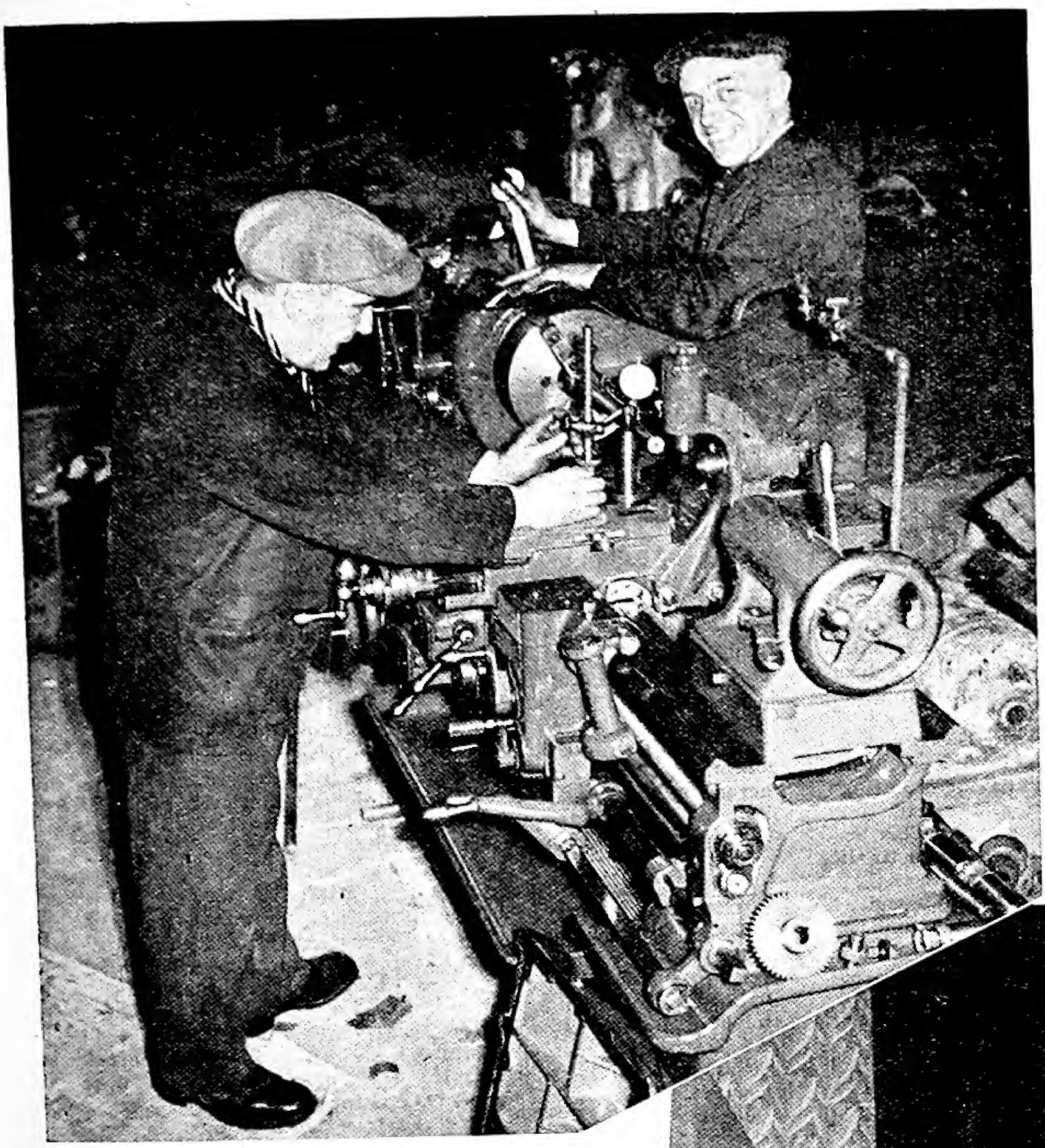
M. Albert Pierlot, Belgian Premier, was detained in France when that country capitulated, and not till October 22, 1940, was he able to join his fellow ministers in London.

M. Paul Henri Spaak, Foreign Minister, shared Pierlot's adventures in France and Spain and accompanied him to Britain when, after arrest in Spain, they escaped by aeroplane.

M. Marcel-Henri Jaspar, Belgian Minister of Public Health, made his way independently to London in June, 1940 — before the Belgian Cabinet had decided its future course.

M. Albert de Vleeschauwer, Colonial Minister, used his knowledge and influence to ensure that the great resources of the Belgian Congo were made available to Britain and her Allies.

Photos, Planet News ; Keystone



BELGIAN ENGINEERS AID BRITAIN

Among refugees to whom Britain gave hospitality were some 23,000 Belgian artisans and other workmen. Many were skilled engineers whose services were at once utilized in reconditioning machine tools. Above, two are seen at work on a lathe, being made ready for war production.

Photo, Planet News

in reaching London four months later, after being held up by the Spanish authorities. In the meantime, M. de Vleeschauer proved a specially valuable recruit to the Allied cause, for his knowledge of Belgium's colonial problems ensured that the immense resources of the Belgian Congo would be placed at the Allies' disposal. He declared that the Belgian Army in the Congo was ready and was a complete army. Not only did the Belgian Congo's loyalty deny a valuable source of raw materials to the Germans, but it enabled important contributions to be made to the British armies in Africa. Thanks to the Congo these forces were supplied with field ambulances, transport, surgeries and X-ray apparatus, while a hospital on the Ituri Plateau was offered for immediate use.

In Britain itself Belgians were not idle. Numerous trawlers, based on British ports and manned by Belgian fishermen, gathered valuable harvests from the sea. Belgian workmen (mostly skilled), to the number of 23,000, found work in British war industries. Belgium contributed 400,000 tons of merchant shipping to the cause. A motorized Belgian Legion was re-equipped.

Nine-tenths of Belgium's airmen, among them 230 first-line aircraft crews, escaped to France and many of them succeeded in reaching Britain later. By August, 1940, Belgian air squadrons were in service again with the R.A.F. During the autumn air battles around London they had eighteen German machines "certain" to their credit and five more "probables."

BELGIAN PARLIAMENT IN EXILE

Meeting in Paris after King Leopold's surrender, the Belgian Parliament had an unhappy task. Soon it had to remove to Bordeaux, and later the French collapse placed its members in extreme peril. Some of the Ministers were able to get away to London at once, but others were detained for some months (see page 1272). Below, M. van Cauwelaert, President of the Chamber, addressing the members.

Photo, Keystone



THE PREMIER ON BRITAIN'S HOME FRONT

From time to time Mr. Churchill paused in his gigantic labours to give the House of Commons a survey of the war's progress. From one such speech, made on November 5, 1940, we reprint passages dealing with the situation at home, followed by a short excerpt from the Prime Minister's moving tribute to Mr. Chamberlain three days after the death of that statesman.

SINCE I last addressed the House on general topics about a month ago, the course of events at home has not been unexpected, nor on the whole unsatisfactory. Herr Hitler declared on September 4 that as we would not bend to his will he would wipe out our cities. I have no doubt that when he gave the order he sincerely believed that it was in his power to carry his will into effect. However, the cities of Britain are still standing, they are quite distinctive objects in the landscape, and our people are going about their tasks with the utmost activity. Fourteen thousand civilians have been killed and 20,000 seriously wounded, nearly four-fifths of them in London. That has been the loss of life and limb. As against this, scarcely 300 soldiers have been killed and 500 wounded. So much for the attack on military objectives.

A great deal of house property has been destroyed or damaged, but nothing that cannot be covered by our insurance scheme. Very little damage has been done to our munitions and aircraft production, though a certain amount of time has been lost through frequent air raid warnings. This lost time will have to be made up as we get settled down to the new conditions.

None of the services upon which the life of our great cities depends—water, fuel, electricity, gas, sewerage—not one has broken down. On the contrary, although there must inevitably be local shortages, all the authorities concerned with these vital functions of a modern community feel that they are on top of their job, and are feeling it increasingly as each week is passed.

Transport has been a greater difficulty, as may well be imagined, when we think of the vast numbers who go in and out of our great cities every day. However, we are getting a good grip of that, and I say with some confidence that by one method or another, and probably by many methods at the same time, the problems connected with transport will be solved in a manner tolerable to the great numbers of people who are affected.

Shelters are being multiplied and improved, and preparations on an extensive scale are in progress for mitigating the inevitable severities of the winter to those who are using the shelters.

'A Grand Life If We Do Not Weaken'

IN these vicissitudes the bearing of our people, not only in London, but in Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and other places, has gained the unstinted admiration of all classes throughout the British Empire, throughout the United States and, so far as they have been allowed to hear about it, among the peoples of the captive countries. As I was going home the other night I asked a group of steel-helmeted men who stood about the door what was going on, and a deep voice in the background said: "It's a grand life if we do not weaken." There is the British watchword for the winter of 1940. We will think of something else by the winter of 1941. . . . .

Some of those very clever people who are sometimes wise after the event are now talking about "the invasion scare." I do not mind that, because it is true that the danger of invasion, particularly invasion by barges, has diminished with the coming of the winter months and the unpredictable uncertainty of the weather. It has also been diminished by the victories of the Royal Air Force and the ever-growing strength of the British Army.

When I spoke at the end of June I set forth in detail the well-known difficulties which would attend the invasion of these islands, and which had been forgotten in years when we had not considered the matter at all. At the time we had only a few brigades of well-armed and well-trained troops in this island. We had no Home Guard to deal with an invader or to deal with air-borne attacks behind the lines, and the Royal Air Force had not then proved itself master of our own air by daylight.

Very different is the scene today. We have a very large Army here, improving in equipment and training continually. The main part of the Army is now highly mobile, and is being constantly imbued with the spirit of counter-attack. We have 1,700,000 in the Home Guard, all of whom will be in uniform by the end of this year, and nearly all of whom are in uniform at this moment. Nearly 1,000,000 of the Home Guard have rifles or machine-guns. Nearly half of the whole Home Guard are veteran solders of the last war. Such a force is of the highest value and importance. A country where every street and every village bristles with loyal and resolute armed men is a country against which the kind of tactics which destroyed Dutch resistance—tactics of parachutists or air-borne troops in carriers or gliders, fifth column activities, if there were any over here, and I am increasingly sceptical—a country so defended would not be liable to be overthrown by such tactics. Therefore, I agree that the invasion danger has for the time been diminished.

Absence of Invasion a British Victory

BUT do not let us make the mistake of assuming that it has passed away or that it may not occur in more acute form or in some other form. What is it that has turned an invasion into an invasion scare? It is the maintenance in Britain of strong forces and unremitting vigilance by sea, air and land. A mighty army crouches across the Channel and the North Sea, and substantial masses of shipping are gathered in all the harbours of the Western seaboard of Europe from the North Cape to the Gironde river.

We must not let our "shallow-clevers" lead us into thinking that this is all pretence—a manoeuvre to tie us down here and prevent us redisposing our forces. The vital realities of their duties must be borne in on the whole of our home forces and the whole of our Home Guard during these winter months. There must be no relaxation except for necessary leave, but let me say this: It is plain fact that the invasion, planned on so vast a scale, has not been attempted in spite of the very great need of the enemy to destroy us in our citadel, and all those anxious months, when we stood alone and the whole of the world wondered, have passed away—that fact constitutes in itself one of the historic victories of the British Isles and is a monumental milestone on our onward march. . . . .

FROM A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, NOVEMBER 12:

IN paying a tribute of respect and of regard to an eminent man who has been taken from us, no one is obliged to alter the opinions which he has formed or expressed upon issues which have become a part of history. . . . . The only guide to a man is his conscience. The only shield to his memory is the rectitude and sincerity of his actions. It is very imprudent to walk through life without this shield, because we are so often mocked by the failure of our hopes and the upsetting of our calculations. . . . It fell to Neville Chamberlain in one of the supreme crises of the world to be contradicted by events, to be disappointed in his hopes, and to be deceived and cheated by a wicked man. But what were these hopes in which he was disappointed? What were those wishes in which he was frustrated? What was that faith that was abused? They were surely the most noble and benevolent instincts of the human heart—the love of peace, the toil for peace, the strife for peace, the pursuit of peace, even at great peril and certainly to the utter disdain of popularity or clamour. . . . Herr Hitler protests with frantic words and gestures that he has only sought peace. What do these ravings and outpourings count before the silence of Neville Chamberlain's tomb? . . .

Chapter 122

HOME FRONT: HOW BRITAIN CARRIED ON THROUGHOUT THE AIR BATTLE

Facing the Menace of Invasion: Britain One Great Fortress—Strengthening the Cabinet—Lord Beaverbrook as Minister of Aircraft Production—Death of Mr. Chamberlain—Replenishing the National Purse—Months of Fierce Conflict and Hard Toil—The Metropolis by Night—'London Can Take It'

As summer passed into autumn, as the furious battle was fought in the skies overhead, Britain waited, watched, and worked. The invasion, so often threatened, still tarried, but there was no relaxation of the nation's vigilance. "The Prime Minister wishes it to be known," read a statement issued from No. 10, Downing Street on August 3, "that the possibility of German attempts at invasion has by no means passed away. The fact that the Germans are now putting about rumours that they do not intend an invasion should be regarded with a double dose of the suspicion which attaches to all their utterances. Our sense of growing strength and preparedness must not lead to the slightest relaxation of vigilance or moral alertness."



The Prime Minister's warning fell on ears attuned to danger. So far as the armed forces were concerned, indeed, it was hardly necessary, since, as General Sir Ronald Adam, G.O.C. Northern Command, put it, they had realized that the only way to face the situation was to go to bed thinking that the enemy would attack the next morning—thinking that and knowing that if he did attack he would be annihilated. For by now Britain was one great fortress. Her beaches, however desolate, had been covered by obstacles and brought under the range of gunfire. The whole countryside was an area of manoeuvre in which Army and Air Force practised in the closest collaboration. Along the coasts the Navy, too, entered into that fertile partnership. Every aerodrome was strongly defended, and at positions scattered far and wide throughout the country's length and breadth great armies stood to arms ready and eager for the day of battle. Then behind the Regulars stood a million and more of the Home Guard, whose spirit was well displayed in the question one of its members, a miner by job, put to a general: "Do you think Hitler is coming, sir? It will be an awful pity if he doesn't." Then on August 19 the whole of Great Britain was declared to be a defence area. Regional commissioners throughout the country were empowered, subject to the appropriate control and working in close cooperation with the military authorities, to issue any directions or orders for defence preparations within their areas. The new order was a precautionary measure, placing no fresh restrictions on the freedom of the public, but it did enable any measures which might become urgently necessary on account of enemy landings by air or sea to be introduced without delay in any part of the country where it was necessary.

Ready to Meet Invasion

A few weeks after Mr. Churchill's warning Mr. Eden, Secretary for War, re-emphasized the need for constant vigilance. Speaking in London on September 3, the first anniversary of the declaration of war, he said that "the Battle of Britain still beats about our ears, and August has been for us in many respects the best month of this fighting year. But it would be foolish to suppose that because the autumn

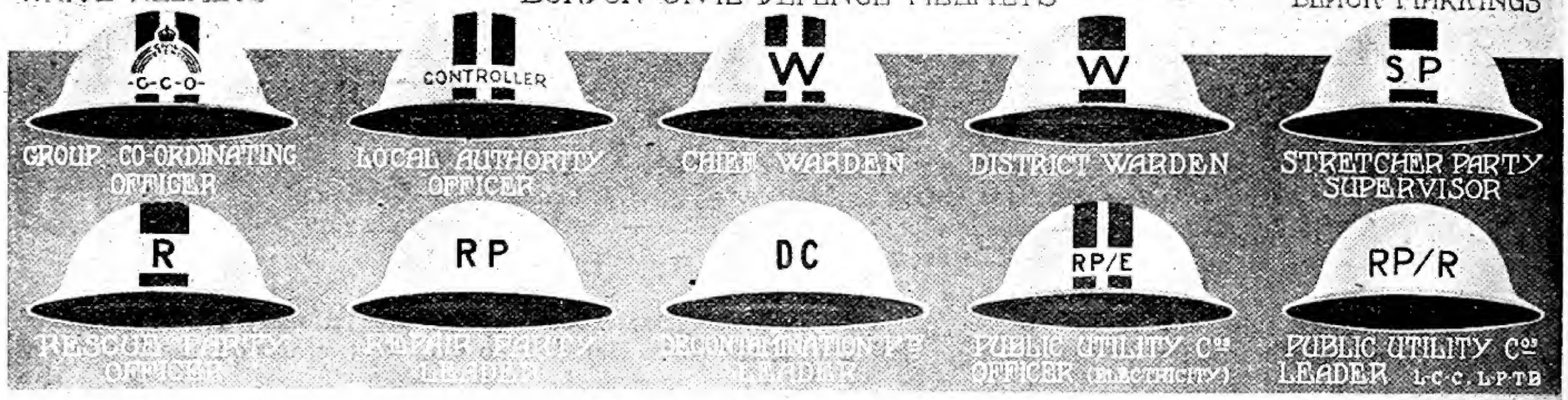


NEW WEAPONS FOR OUR NEW FIGHTING MACHINES

Today, when tanks fight tanks as well as shooting down aircraft and attacking motorized ground forces, they need a fast-firing gun with a terrific 'punch.' The Besa gun, which men of the Royal Tank Regiment are here examining, will fire at the rate of 850 r.p.m. A heavier type has a rate of 450 r.p.m. Top, the steel eye-shield issued to British troops during the autumn of 1940.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Sport & General

WHITE HELMETS — LONDON CIVIL DEFENCE HELMETS — BLACK MARKINGS



WHITE HELMET RED MARKINGS — AUXILIARY FIRE SERVICE GREY HELMETS WHITE MARKINGS — WHITE HELMET BLACK MARKINGS



METROPOLITAN POLICE REGULAR & PENSIONERS BLUE HELMETS

METROPOLITAN POLICE SPECIAL CONSTABULARY WHITE & GOLD MARKINGS



BLACK HELMETS — CIVIL DEFENCE PERSONNEL — WHITE MARKINGS



OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES AND SOCIETIES



LOCAL VARIATIONS



STEEL HELMETS OF THE HOME FRONT ARMY

During the autumn and winter of 1940 the various units of Britain's Civil Defence Organization came into full play. Here is shown a representative selection of the various distinctive markings on their steel helmets. In the fourth row from the top it should be noted that the Gas Identification Officer's helmet was coloured yellow with diamonds in black, while that of the Incident Officer had a light blue cloth cover tied over it. Repair Party Squads were divided into four sections :—RP/E Electricity ; RP/G Gas ; RP/R Roads ; RP/W Water.

Based in part on information kindly supplied by the Ministry of Home Security and National Service



FIGHTING THE FIRE-RAISERS

Above, after one of the daylight raids on London in the last phase of the Battle of Britain. The streets were full of hosepipes, and firemen signallers passed on messages. Below, tackling a conflagration in a London street on an autumn night in 1940.

Photos, Fox; Planet News

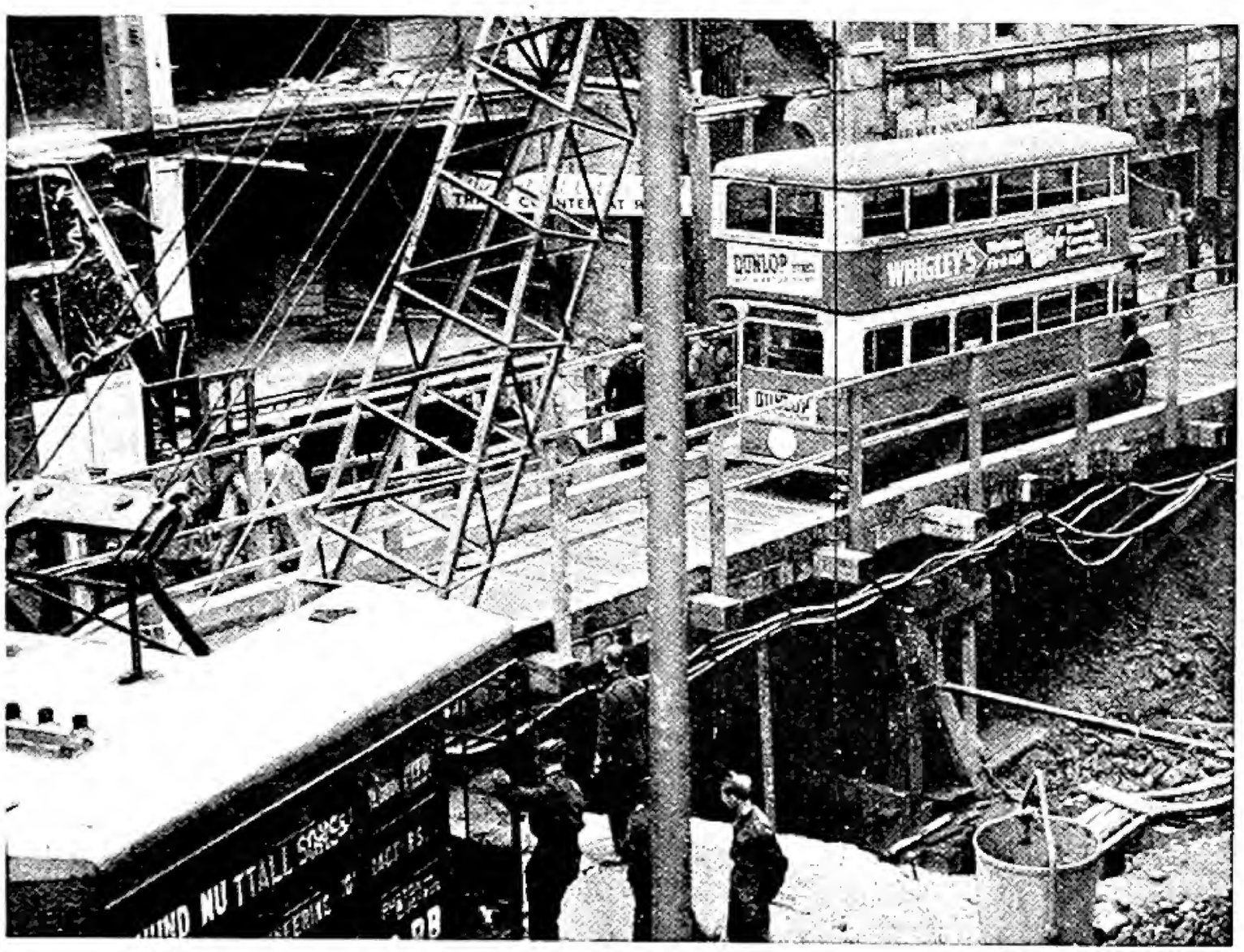
approaches the threat of invasion is past. There is no shred of evidence to show that Hitler has abandoned his declared intention to seek to subdue this country by invasion. There is plenty of evidence to cause us to be especially watchful during these next few weeks. Vigilance is as compelling a duty today as it has been at any time in these last three months. To watch and ward is our instruction, not as troops that hold passively a defensive line, but waiting to spring should the foe come within our grasp.

"On this anniversary occasion," went on Mr. Eden, "I must express the gratitude we feel for the help brought to us by the Dominions oversea." Then turning to the expansion of the Army since the preceding May, he said: "In June and July we were calling up men at a rate three times that prevailing in previous months, and this though the Army at home was undergoing a reorganization on an unprecedented scale. Nearly 500,000 joined the Army in a few weeks. Many of them are now in the ranks of new battalions which will, I trust, in due course form the infantry of several new divisions. . . . I do not believe that in the quality of the personnel we have ever had a better Army than today. But an Army, if it is to wage a successful war, requires something more—it requires equipment and training. In both these essentials no standard but the highest can content us. There is still much leeway to make up.

"Without doubt we are making progress. The defence works within these islands have been pushed forward at an immense speed; in contrast with three months ago they represent a national transformation. Supplies of equipment are being speeded up. Mr. Morrison and his department are doing all in their power, but the blunt fact must be faced and stated—there is no weapon in its armoury in respect of which the Army does not ask for more. Our Army is expanding daily, and if this greater Army is to play its part we must have these weapons . . . Therefore,

Supplies for the Army





IMPERTURBABLE LONDON DEFIED THE LUFTWAFFE

Throughout the period of heavy night bombing the spirit of Londoners was indomitable. When their usual way to work was barred by raid damage they found another provided, and took it without fuss or bother. Charing Cross Road was blocked for a time by a large crater, but soon men of the Royal Engineers built a temporary bridge to take one line of traffic. Below, a gas-company's repair worker protected by a special mask seals a leak.

Photos, Sport & General ; Planet News



while the Army joins wholeheartedly in the call for more warships, more Spitfires, more Hurricanes, more long-range bombers, we have our own variant of the chorus, and it runs : more tanks, more guns, more dive-bombers."

If the Army was increasing in strength, so too were all the armed forces of the Crown ; indeed, the national effort as a whole was growing apace, stimulated and directed by the men whom Mr. Churchill had gathered and was gathering about him in his ministry of national union and " win the war." One of the most obvious successes of his team was Lord Beaverbrook, who as Minister of Aircraft Production was responsible for what was, perhaps, the most important department of the industrial effort. Lord Beaverbrook's services were such, indeed, that early in August he was invited by the Prime Minister to become a member of the War Cabinet, while still continuing to be Minister of Aircraft Production. The new appointment increased the number of ministers in the War Cabinet to six (Mr. Churchill, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord President of the Council, Lord Halifax, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Attlee, Lord Privy Seal, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, Minister Without Portfolio, and now Lord Beaverbrook).

Two months later there were more Cabinet changes, almost a reconstruction, following upon the resignation through ill health of Mr. Chamberlain. In his letter to Mr. Churchill, asking him to relieve him of his post and to submit his resignation to the King for His Majesty's approval, the ex-Premier closed with an expression of " unshaken confidence that under your leadership this country, with her Allies and associates, will succeed in overcoming the forces of barbarism which have reduced a great part of Europe to a condition little better than slavery." Sir John Anderson succeeded Mr. Chamberlain as Lord President of the Council ; Mr. Herbert Morrison became Secretary of State for the Home Department and Minister of Home Security ; Lord Cranborne was appointed Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs ; Captain Oliver Lyttelton became President of the Board of Trade, and Sir Andrew Duncan, Minister of Supply ; Lieut.-Col. J. T. C. Moore-Brabazon was appointed Minister of Transport, and Lord Reith became Minister of Works and Buildings and First Commissioner of Works. At the same time, Sir Kingsley Wood, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Ernest Bevin, Minister of Labour and National Service, were appointed members of the War Cabinet, thereby increasing the membership of that body to eight.

More Cabinet Changes

Another consequence of Mr. Chamberlain's retirement was the election of Mr. Churchill as leader in his place of the Conservative Party, on October 9.

Mr. Chamberlain's death, just a month later, was received with heartfelt regret, not least among those most strongly opposed to his policy of appeasement. The errors of Munich, if errors they were, were forgotten in the memory of the great worker for peace. The ashes of the dead statesman were buried in Westminster Abbey. At a memorial service held in Mr. Chamberlain's own city, the Bishop of Birmingham paid tribute to his profound desire for peace. " Today," he said, " western civilization is destroying itself. The pattern

TRAFFIC ON BRITAIN'S VITAL RAILWAYS NEVER CEASED

Astonishing even to those familiar with the preparations made beforehand for this work of repair was the rapidity with which damaged railway lines were restored after a raid. Above, a wrecked bridge and how it was made good by Pioneers and R.E. men. Below, a crater in the L.N.E.R. tracks—and the scene a few hours after.

Photos, Central Press; Fox



Photo, Keystone

POST OFFICE ENGINEERS LAY NEW TELEPHONE CABLES AFTER A RAID

One reason for the successful working of the various repair organizations was that each section of the public utility services maintained its own squads, all ready to dash out on first-aid work on telephone and telegraph lines, broken water or gas mains, damaged electric cables, wrecked sewers, etc. This photograph shows a party of Post Office Engineers and R.E.s taking emergency telephone cables over a bomb crater.



BOMBS COULD NOT DAUNT THE LONDON COSTER

In late November sunshine a fruit hawker's stall in a London street 'carries on,' with destruction all around. His manifesto—' Hitler's Bombs Can't Beat Us—Our Oranges Came Through Musso's Lake '—undoubtedly helps his trade, although imported fruit was not then as scarce as it was to become in the following year.

Photo, Keystone



LONDON'S LORD MAYOR WITHOUT HIS USUAL POMP

In November, 1940, as in the first year of war, the new Lord Mayor was sworn in with all the customary ceremonies but without the pomp and display of the Lord Mayor's Show. Sir George Wilkinson, newly installed at the Guildhall, is setting out for the Law Courts in a motor limousine, with a motor-cycle escort, instead of in his gilded coach.

Photo, L.N.A.

of its destruction is only now being woven, and the verdict of history will be written centuries hence. Men will then try to estimate Neville Chamberlain's brief but valiant effort for peace. Will they not place him among those who, though they failed, failed greatly?"

Throughout those months Parliament continued to be a faithful servant of the people. Never, perhaps, in recent years had its usefulness been so manifest, whether as the ventilator of grievances or the prodder of slothful departments, the controller of expenditure or the watchdog of public liberties. The pity of it was that owing to the paper restrictions the newspapers were able to give only a very







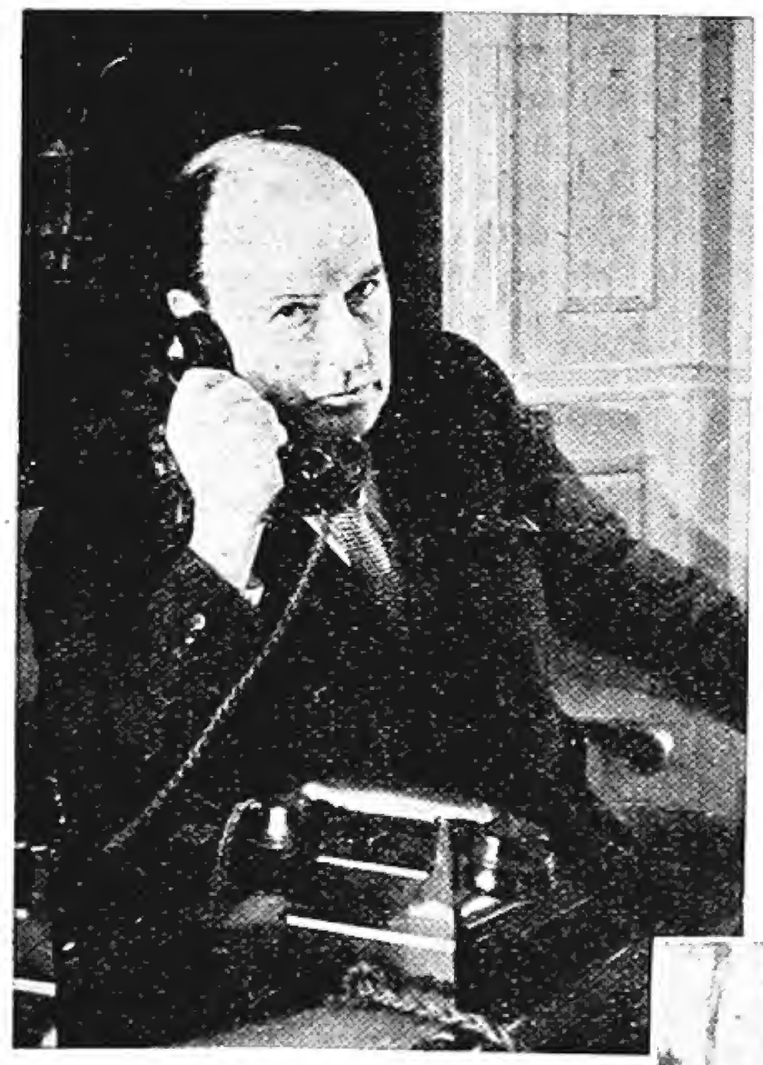
NEW METHODS FOR THE NEW ARMY

Above, soldiers at practice with American tommy guns, short-range quick-firing weapons used from hip or shoulder. Left, motor-cycle patrols of the Northern Command. Right, a sniper in special camouflage costume hidden among the bracken.
Photos, Wide World; B.I.P.P.A.; Keystone

abbreviated account of parliamentary proceedings—so brief, indeed, as to be almost garbled. The Premier and the leading ministers were given a good press, but the great majority of the back-benchers went unreported, save in Hansard. But let it be admitted that they did their duty according to their lights. They were quick to denounce petty despotism, to expose waste, to tell the Government what the people in the back streets were thinking and saying. And the press, too, within the limits imposed by the drastic curtailment of its raw material, deserved well of the country. Once again the advantages of a free press—or comparatively free press—were clearly revealed; only occasionally were its activities denounced as "stunts." Thus Mr. Duff Cooper applied the term to the newspapers' onslaught on his canvass to determine the spirit of the people: "Cooper's snoopers" they had nicknamed the inquirers. But, generally speaking, the press was an invaluable safety-valve. It told the Government and told Parliament what the people really wanted and expected of them. Even Parliament would have been ineffective and weak without the mighty power of the press serving to encourage and to warn, to blame and to bless.

In the all-important field of finance the House of Commons enacted to the full its traditional role of replenishing the national purse. On July 23, introducing the third Budget of the war and the second for the financial year 1940–41, the Chancellor's estimated balance sheet for the year showed an expenditure of £3,466,790,000, while the revenue on the existing taxation basis was a mere £1,234,391,000, leaving a deficiency of £2,232,399,000. This the Chancellor proposed to reduce by new taxation to the extent of £125,800,000; the standard rate of Income Tax was raised to 8s. 6d., and the rates of Surtax and Estate Duties were increased, as were the duties on beer, tobacco, wines, etc. An interesting innovation was that henceforth Income Tax was to be deducted at source by employers from the salaries and wages paid to their employees. Then a new tax, the Purchase Tax, was imposed on a large range of goods, the principal exceptions being foods, drinks, children's clothes and books. It was estimated that this new tax would bring in £110,000,000 in a full year; but, all the same, an enormous gap was left between the estimated expenditure and the revenue which it was anticipated would be received. This gap could be filled only by borrowing; hence an intensification of the War Savings Campaign, under the direction of Sir Robert Kindersley, which urged the people to save every penny that could be saved and lend it to the Government, either by purchasing War Savings Certificates and War Bonds or by putting it into the Post Office Savings Bank. But the problem of raising the money required for the nation's war effort was a difficult one. Month by month the cost of the war went up by leaps and bounds: thus during April, 1940, the *daily* cost was £6,900,000; during June, £9,600,000; while by October it had risen to £10,400,000. November saw it increase by a further two millions a *day*.

In those months of fierce conflict and hard toil Britain's face changed. Even



MINISTER OF TRANSPORT

Lt.-Col. J. T. C. Moore-Brabazon was a pioneer motorist and had been Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport (1923-4 and 1924-7). He brought special aptitude and considerable experience to the post of Minister on his appointment early in October, 1940.

the country's physical face was affected as the bombs brought havoc into the towns and villages, as the fields were pitted with holes, and as the downs and beaches were littered with the burnt-out wrecks of Nazi aircraft. On every hand there were signs of war. Shattered buildings, streets of houses flattened by the blast, churches in ruins, historic buildings marred beyond repair. But life, too, changed in those tremendous months. Millions of people were uprooted from their homes and found themselves in places strange and distant; there were the hundreds of thousands of children who had been evacuated from the great cities and towns and had to adjust themselves to an existence in the country. There were the staffs of business firms, Civil Servants, members of the B.B.C. and other corporations now established far from London.

There was the great army of munition workers, men and women who often had their jobs many miles from their homes. Then, of course, there were the millions of young men, and not so very young, who were called up for service with the armed forces of the Crown. Women and girls, too—in the A.T.S. and W.A.A.F., in the W.R.N.S. and other services, who were "conducting" trams and buses, driving lorries, filling to an ever greater extent the places of the men who had been called up.

Again, there were hundreds of thousands who had had imposed upon their daily lives strange new experiences, undreamed of heretofore. Fresh from their offices and workshop benches, men donned the armlet and steel hat of the warden and faced terror in the nightly blitzes; women left their kitchens and nurseries to aid the wounded and shock-ridden; young girls tapped their typewriters by day and drove ambulances by night. And in the morning they tripped through the glass-strewn streets, across the litter of hoses, broken brick and indescribable debris, on their way to shop or office.



SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DOMINIONS

Lord Cranborne, a former Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had resigned with Mr. Eden in February, 1938. Mr. Churchill later appointed him Paymaster-General, a post he held until, in October, 1940, he became Secretary of State for the Dominions.

Photos, Topical Press; Planet News

One of the most vivid pictures of that changed world was painted for the Americans by Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, Minister of Health, in a broadcast on October 6. He was speaking of London. "At midnight," he said, "in the ink-black streets few people are abroad save the Cockney wardens who stand sentinel for the army of civilian-soldiers who man the Air Raid Defence services. I take off my tin hat to them, one and all; for I have seen them display under fire the cool proficiency of veteran troops. There are stretcher parties, whose work may be among the most gruesome, yet whose cars are sometimes driven to the scene of a catastrophe by mere slips of girls who



AT BOARD OF TRADE

Captain Oliver Lyttelton was not a member of Parliament when his appointment (October 3, 1940) to the Board of Trade was announced. On the outbreak of war he had been made Controller of Non-Ferrous Metals in the Ministry of Supply.

have somehow acquired nerves of steel. There are the mobile first-aid units, each with their skilled doctor and trained nurse; and the ambulance teams, ever ready to convey the more severe casualties swiftly to the emergency hospitals; and the rescue parties, whose urgent task it is to break through the massed debris of collapsed buildings and save the lives that are trapped beneath; and the various other trained bands of London's civilian defenders.

"The incendiary and oil bombs come swishing down," he went on, "like a scattering bouquet of malicious crackers. In a brief space of time half a dozen buildings may be alight around you, the leaping red flames eating swiftly at their vitals. Suddenly a procession of fire-engines come careering along the flame-illumined street. Men jump from the running-boards. The night is filled with robust epithets addressed to the hoses and hydrants in the brief interval of coupling them together. But as suddenly as it began the torrent of oaths ceases. Another torrent has begun to flow; already the water is creeping through the long worm of the hose. It splutters for a moment at its mouth, then gathers strength and leaps

Fighting the Fire-Bombs



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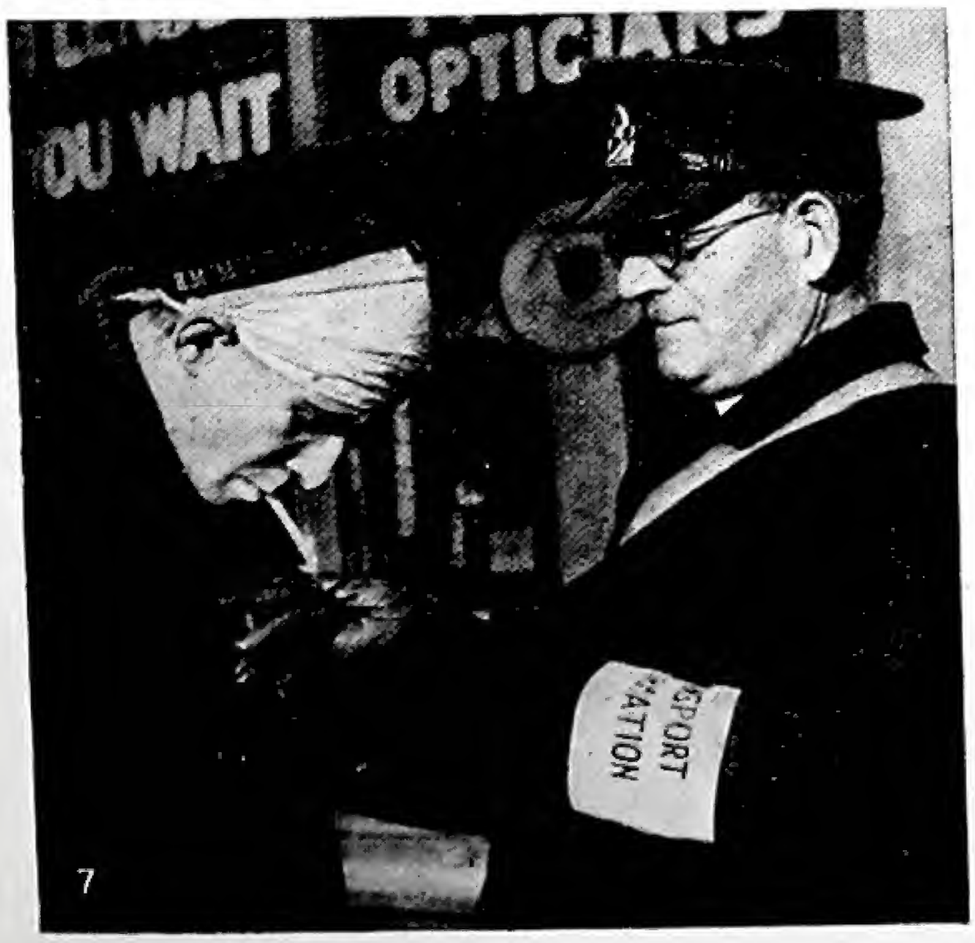

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6



FACETS OF WARTIME LIFE IN LONDON

Scenes in the summer and autumn of 1940. 1. Busmen adopt 'tin' hats. 2. The Warder at the Tower becomes a warden. 3. Polish and other nations' newspapers on sale. 4. Shelters for bus queues were provided. 5. A bomb in Fleet Street meant many changes of offices—new addresses on a rope. 6. Street information kiosks for railway travellers after a raid. 7. London Transport posted information men to help travellers whose normal routes were blocked. 8. Lambeth Walk had its own Spitfire Fund as early as August, 1940.

Photos, Keystone; "Daily Mirror"; Fox; Planet News; Topical Press; G.P.U.



into combat with the fire. And shortly afterwards the wild flames are under control."

Then Mr. MacDonald went on to describe the Control Rooms, which are the nerve centres of the Civil Defence organization. Here the Town Clerk has abandoned his wig for a steel helmet, and the Mayor, who in peacetime spent his evenings dozing through after-dinner speeches, now spends his nights directing semi-military operations.

Now that London was in the front line the citizens were not in their houses at night; they were in their shelters, and Mr. MacDonald went on to describe one of them. "The place is a wide subterranean roadway," he said. "I visited it one night at 12 o'clock, with a slumberers below. Some standing, some crouching, some lying full-length, they formed a circle round the central figure of a powerful young girl. She stood almost motionless, her head bowed, a coil of her hair fallen forwards over her face, her body slightly twisted so that an ample hip gave occasional support to one elbow, while with strong sweeps of her arms she conjured from a giant accordion the whole series of soldiers' songs of the last Great War. Her concentration was so absolute that it seemed as though nothing in the distraught world mattered but gay, light music; and now and then, as she played, some member of her rapt audience broke from the rest to dance a little jig, or a pair of lovers stepped out and waltzed round her in the circle of light."

There were Americans in London at the height of the battle—journalists some of them, who had come over to see for themselves, so as to be able to tell their own people how the Londoners were taking it. One of them was Mr. Ralph Ingersoll, proprietor of "P.M.", the New York evening newspaper. Like Mr. MacDonald, he visited one of the big underground shelters one night—a shelter in which 8,000 people were finding refuge and some sleep. "There one could see the whole evolution of shelter life under one roof," he said. "Deep in one cavernous room people slept shoulder to shoulder, till they were so crowded, with no more room on the floor, that they slept propped against walls, curled up on the metal stairs in unbelievable congestion. Cold and draughty at one end, it was thick and uncomfortable at another. Yet a few hundred yards away a beginning had been made on bringing order out of this chaos. Hundreds of sturdy, triple-tier bunks had been installed . . . one upon another. Each was numbered and the occupant came back to the same bed every night. The big shelters in the deep Tubes, sixty feet underground, are at once the safest and the most depressing. In one you can walk a full half-mile stepping over the feet of an absolutely solid carpet of sleeping humanity. In the middle of the tunnel you feel as if you could take a handful of air and press it between your hands and make a snowball of it." And deep down there were "the most inspiring people I have met in London"—the wardens and nurses in First-Aid rooms.



'HELP YOUR NEIGHBOUR'

An alleviation of the mass discomforts of black-out travelling in London during the winter of 1940–41 was provided by the R.A.C. and A.A. scheme for free lifts by motorists. Over 90,000 permits for extra petrol were issued between November and March, three or four times this number of extra passengers being taken by road.

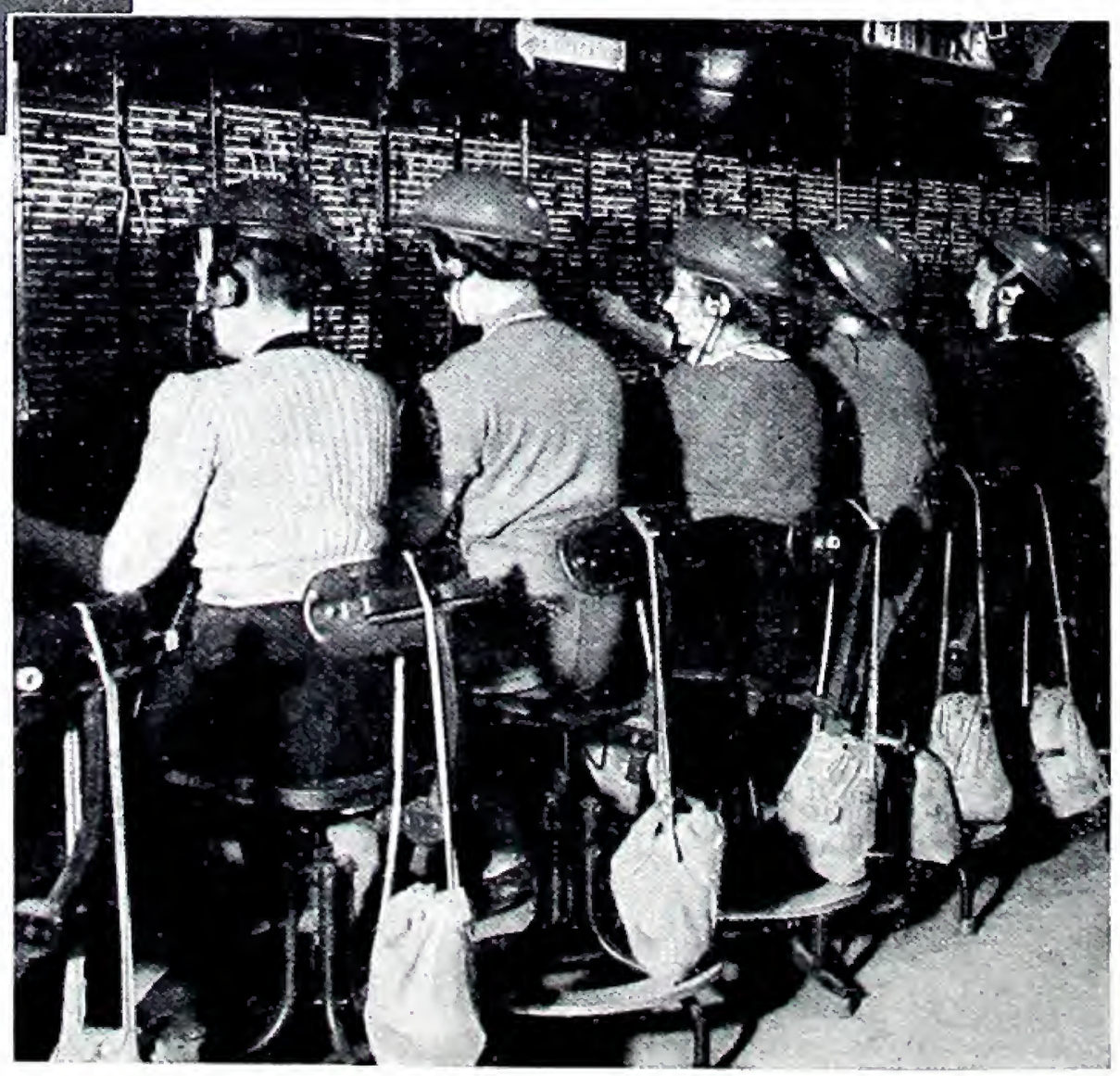
Photo, Planet News



WOMEN IN WAR WORK

In September, 1940, women porters began to replace men on London's Underground. London telephone girls were required during 'alerts' to wear their steel helmets at the switchboard.

Photos, Keystone; Central Press



moonlit sky and an air raid proceeding furiously outside. But the sounds of conflict did not penetrate the shadowy interior. On the ground at my feet lay score upon score of people, sleeping. In the arches beyond there were also many prostrate figures, while others sat on their haunches playing cards by the dim light of lanterns, or lolled gossiping in deck-chairs, or strolled about conversing together. In one arch, more brightly lit than the others by a spot-lamp hanging from its ceiling, the group of people appeared like a company of actors on a stage raised above the



LIFE WENT ON IN 'HELL'S CORNER'

In the autumn of 1940 German long-range guns mounted on the coast near Cap Gris Nez and other places started shelling the town of Dover, as well as convoys in Dover Straits. Despite damage and some casualties the life of Dover was at no time seriously interrupted. Left, a street notice in October. Above, after autumn and winter shelling children were, despite official efforts at evacuation, still playing about the streets of the town.

Photos, Planet News ; Fox



Then here is Mr. Quentin Reynolds, London correspondent of another famous American newspaper, "Collier's Weekly," who spoke the commentary to a sound film, "London Can Take It." He, too, watched London preparing for a night of bombing—the crowds going into the shelters, the searchlights moving in position, the guns getting ready, and the muster of the firemen, air-raid wardens and ambulance drivers.

"There's the wail of the banshee . . . The nightly siege of London has begun. The city is dressed for battle. Here they come. Now the searchlights are poking long white, inquisitive fingers into the blackness of the night. These are not Hollywood sound effects. This is the music they play every night in London—the symphony of war. *That* was a bomb."

Then he described how the army of the people swung into action—how brokers, clerks, pedlars, merchants by day, became heroes by night. Then at last the wail of the banshee again. This time a friendly wail. The bombers have gone. "London raises its head, shakes the debris of the night from its hair and takes stock of the damage done. London has been hurt during the night. The sign of a great fighter in the ring is: 'Can he get up from the floor after being knocked down?' London does this every morning."

And not only London but, as was very shortly to be proved, Coventry and Bristol, Plymouth and Birmingham, Cardiff and Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, and the rest.

Even in Germany they wondered. Time after time Hitler's poor dupes were told that Britain was on her last legs, that her towns had been destroyed, her people slaughtered, her Navy scattered, her ships sunk, her 'planes blown from the sky. "How is England able to resist," they asked, "for so long? Can England prolong her resistance? Is it really true that 47 million Englishmen are 47 million Churchills, all determined to die rather than give in?"

"Sometimes people ask what it is (to quote Mr. MacDonald again) that makes the German bombs whistle as they fall. I think they are whistling to keep their courage up. They begin to realize that they have met something which is tougher than themselves. It is something which was not made last month in a modern armaments factory. It has been a thousand years in the making, it has been tested and tempered in all the five continents and the seven seas, and it is being purified again today in the onslaught on this island. It is just this: the fibre of the British people."

Chapter 123

AXIS POLITICS DURING THE SUMMER AND AUTUMN OF 1940

Hitler's Diplomatic Offensive—Rumania Loses Dobruja and Much of Transylvania—Results of the Vienna Award: Abdication of King Carol—Japan Joins the Axis: Terms of the Three-Power Pact—German Troops Enter Rumania—Russian Uneasiness—Bulgaria Admits German 'Tourists'—Hungary Adheres to the Tripartite Pact, Followed by Rumania and Slovakia—Molotov Meets Hitler: 'Atmosphere of Mutual Confidence'

As 1940 drew on Hitler's diplomatic offensive became ever more predatory in its aims, more pronounced in its methods, and more strikingly successful in its results. Particularly in the Balkans—using the word in its wider sense to include Hungary and Rumania—were its operations made manifest.

Rumania was the first victim—Rumania, the highly-favoured creation of the Versailles settlement. As we have seen (*see* Chapter 103), King Carol at the end of June was forced to cede Bessarabia (which had once been Russian) and Northern Bukovina (which had been not Russian but Austrian) to Stalin. Carol had protested against the cession, but he was not strong enough to resist, since not only was the Rumanian army no match for Hitler's mechanized hosts, but the internal situation of Rumania was intensely strained. He appealed to Hitler, whose support and sympathy he had endeavoured to secure by his renunciation of the Anglo-French guarantee, accompanied by Rumania's virtual adhesion to the Axis. In vain, however, since Hitler had his own plans for Rumania.

The blow was not long delayed. To Berchtesgaden on July 26 proceeded at Hitler's "invitation" the Rumanian Premier, M. Gigurtu, and the Foreign Minister, M. Manoilescu, who saw the Fuehrer and von Ribbentrop, and next day had interviews in Rome with Mussolini and Ciano (*see* p. 1077). Close on their heels to Berchtesgaden came the Bulgarian Premier and Foreign Minister, Professor Filoff and M. Popoff. What happened at the conference was not revealed, although it was officially stated that the conversations had taken place in an "atmosphere of cordiality." At the end of July M. Manoilescu professed that Rumania had "complete freedom to decide her destiny" and wanted peace, although the peace must be a "just Rumanian peace." Filoff for his part described his interview with the German leaders as having been extremely pleasant, and went on to say that everyone knew now how just were Bulgaria's territorial claims.

A few weeks later Rumania had peace, but whether it was the just peace Manoilescu had envisaged was open to question; Bulgaria received something much more tangible. On August 21 it was announced from Bucharest that at a conference at Craiova Rumanian and Bulgarian delegates had agreed on the cession by Rumania to Bulgaria of Southern Dobruja, that territory which had been Bulgarian from 1878 to 1913, when following the second Balkan war it was ceded to Rumania, Bulgarian again for a time during the Great War, and Rumanian again since 1919. The new frontier, it was decreed, would be that of 1912, and the cession involved the loss of nearly 3,000 square miles, with a considerable strip of the Black Sea littoral, including the Danube port of Silistria and the seaside resort of Balchik.

Hardly had the Dobruja affair been settled in this summary fashion when King Carol was confronted by a boiling-up of the long-standing difficulty over Transylvania, the province which, with the adjoining Hungarian districts in the west, was detached from Hungary by the Treaty of Trianon in 1920 and transferred to Rumania. Hungary had never been reconciled to the situation created at Trianon, and had never ceased to demand the return of Transylvania, whole or in part. When Carol bowed to Stalin's demands and restored Bessarabia to Russia, when a few weeks later Bulgaria demanded and received her lost territory in the Dobruja, Hungary became increasingly clamorous for the restoration of part at least of the territories she had lost.

Hungary Demands Transylvania

As the respectful protegée of the Nazi Reich her appeal was made to Hitler. Already at the meetings at Berchtesgaden and Rome at the end of July the Rumanian Premier and Foreign Minister had been urged to seek a settlement with Hungary over Transylvania, and on August 15 it was announced that Hungary's claims had been presented. Next day the Hungarian and Rumanian delegations met at Turnu Severin. Later the negotiations were broken off because of what Rumania termed the "enormous, unbelievable and absurd" Hungarian demands. There followed violent attacks on Rumania in the Hungarian press and numerous frontier incidents.

Now Hitler himself took a hand in the negotiations. There was an Axis conference at Berchtesgaden on August 28, and two days later there was a meeting at Vienna, attended by the Axis chiefs



AXIS POLITICS IN THE BALKANS

Political moves in the Balkans in August, 1940, resulted in the transfer of a portion of the Dobruja from Rumania to Bulgaria and a considerable part, about 2,000 square miles, of Transylvania to Hungary. Nevertheless, Rumania continued to play its undistinguished part in the Axis sphere of politics.

and the Premier and Foreign Minister of Hungary (Count Teleki and Count Csaky), and M. Gigurtu and M. Manoilescu. At this conference, by what came to be described as the Vienna Award, it was decided that about two-thirds of Transylvania should be



RUMANIA PARTITIONED BY THE VIENNA AWARD

At Vienna, on August 30, 1940, Germany and Italy held a so-called conference with Hungary and Rumania, at which, under threat of force, more than a half of Transylvania was ceded to Hungary. Below, Rumanian ministers studying the new and arbitrary boundaries ; Ciano and Ribbentrop signing the arbitration award ; and, last, Count Csaky, Hungary's Foreign Minister (with the Prime Minister, Count Teleki), countersigning. *Photo, Associated Press*







BULGARIANS IN THE DOBRUJA

The Bulgarian Minister of War, General Daskaloff, was presented with gifts and an embroidered cloak when his troops, by forced agreement, entered what had been the Rumanian Dobruja on August 21, 1940. *Photo, Associated Press*

restored to Hungary. The line of division was drawn in the most arbitrary fashion right across the middle of the country to the Carpathians. Hungary received some 12,000 square miles of territory—the whole of northern Transylvania with Cluj, the capital, and the three Szekler provinces ; inhabited almost wholly by Magyars. Some 2,500,000 people were transferred to Hungary, but of these more than a million were Rumanians, besides some hundreds of thousands of German descent.

The Award, indeed, was altogether contrary to the principles of racial distribution, for many hundreds of thousands of Hungarians were left in the Rumanian portion. Thus not the least striking feature of the Award was that Hungary, from being a racially homogeneous state with minorities in the adjoining countries, was transformed into a country including many minorities. In Rumania and Transylvania in particular the news of the partition was received with anguish. M. Manoilescu let it be known that at Vienna he and his colleague had been presented with what was, in fact, an ultimatum ; neither the Rumanian nor the Hungarian delegation had been allowed to state its own case ; and the Rumanian request for the acceptance of the ethnic principle as the sole basis for territorial

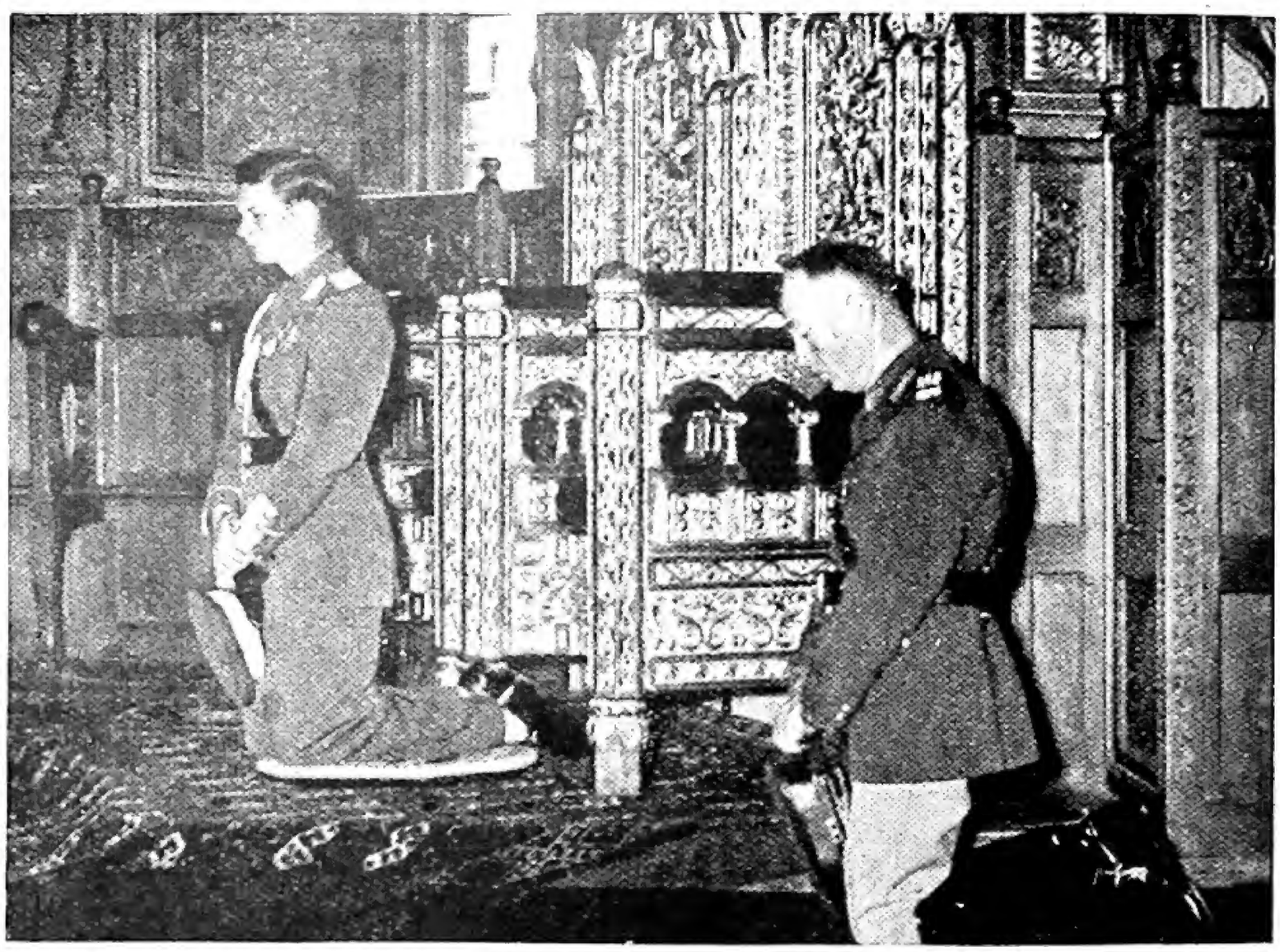
The 'Vienna Award'

adjustment was thrust aside. The Axis Powers, he said, had given the assurance that the Rumanians in Hungary would be well treated, and he emphasized the importance to Rumania of the Axis guarantee of the new frontiers.

Widespread disorder broke out in Rumania as soon as the terms of the Vienna Award were known. Anti-Hungarian and anti-Axis demonstrations took place in the ceded towns. Great crowds paraded the streets singing patriotic songs and shouting that they preferred war to surrender, while multitudes knelt in prayer in the public squares. But these demonstrations were soon banned by the Rumanian Government, who were fearful that they might jeopardize what the arbitration at Vienna had seen fit to spare. There were many clashes with the police, and in Bucharest and other places the Iron Guard rose in what was hardly to be distinguished from a revolt. In Hungary, on the other hand, the Award was received with satisfaction, although there were some who still demanded the whole cake. In the Hungarian Chamber on September 4 Count Teleki and Count Csaky both expressed gratitude to the Axis powers for their assistance.

Rumania in Turmoil

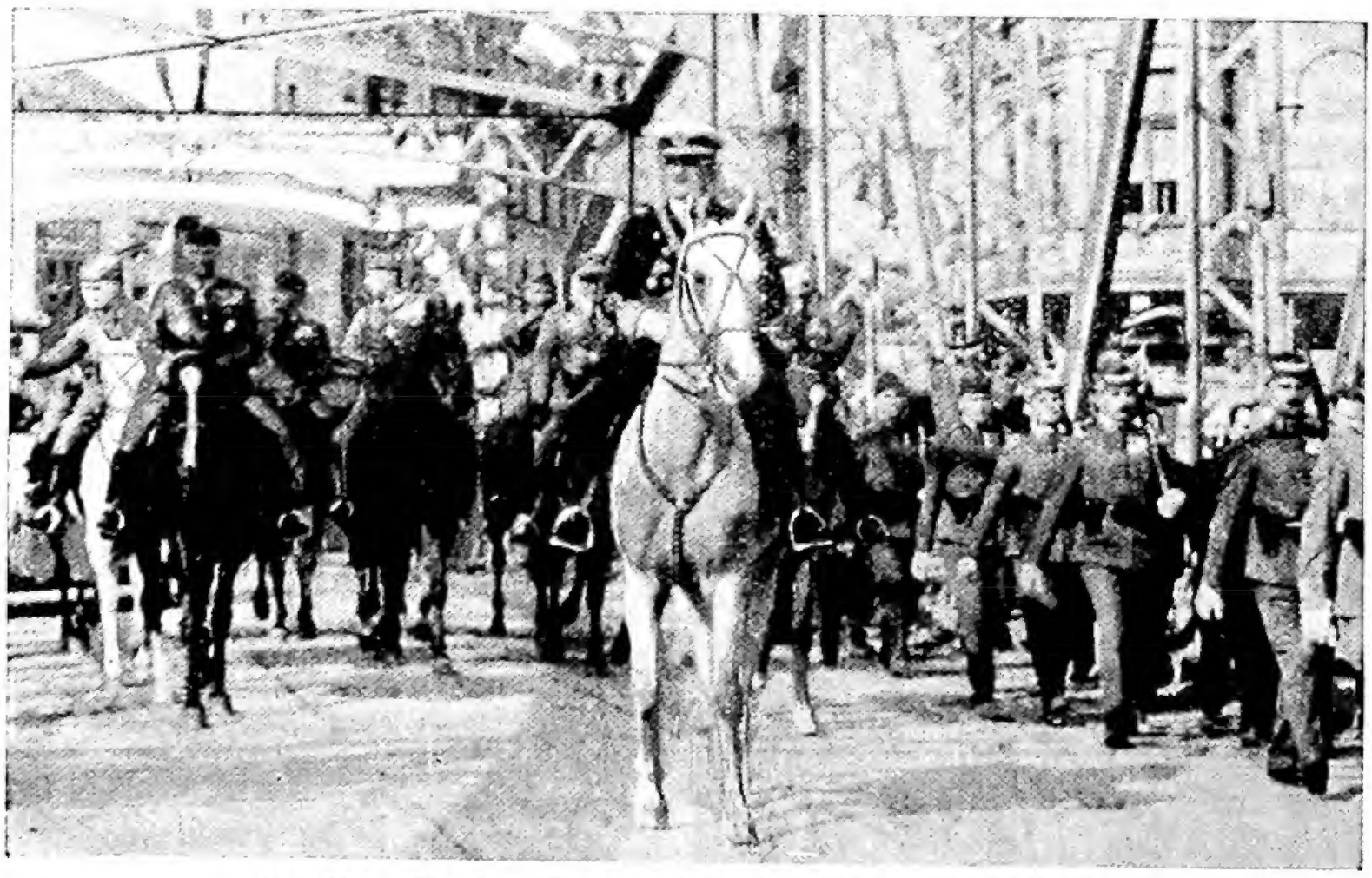
On September 3 the Gigurtu Cabinet resigned, and King Carol asked General Ion Antonescu, formerly Minister of Defence and Chief of the General Staff, to form a new government. One of the new Premier's first acts was to issue a decree abolishing the semi-totalitarian constitution which Carol had set up in 1938, and at the same time the King's prerogatives were severely limited. He remained Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, the fountain of honour and the dispenser of mercy, and the titular head of the state ; but henceforth it was laid down that alterations in the law and the appointment of cabinet ministers could be accomplished by royal decree only when countersigned by the Premier, in whom all the other hitherto royal powers were vested. By the same decree parliament was dissolved, and General Antonescu was designated "Leader of the State."



MICHAEL I REIGNS IN HIS FATHER'S STEAD

Following the loss of nearly a quarter of all Rumanian territory to Hungary and Bulgaria, disorders broke out and King Carol abdicated on September 6. On accession as Michael I, his son attended a religious service at Bucharest, where he is here seen with General Antonescu, who had proclaimed himself Leader of the State.

Photo, Keystone



HUNGARIAN TRIUMPH IN TRANSYLVANIA

By the Vienna Award of August 30, 1940, about two-thirds of Transylvania was transferred from Rumania to Hungary. On September 6 Hungarian troops, led by the Regent, Admiral Nikolas Horthy (above), marched into Siebenbürgen.

Photo, Associated Press

King Carol must have found these changes hard to stomach, and maybe it was with relief that he received a demand from General Antonescu for his abdication. Announcing his decision, King Carol said :

"My beloved country is passing through times of profound disquiet and anxiety. From the day ten years ago when I took over this onerous position as pilot of my country, I have tried to do all my conscience dictated for the good of Rumania, and in so doing I have worked without respite and with complete devotion. Now the country faces great dangers, and is saddened by days of unspeakable misfortune. Inspired by my love for this land, I desire to set aside these dangers by passing on the heavy burden of my reign to my son, whom I know you love so deeply. Making this sacrifice for the sake of my Fatherland, I offer up the warmest prayers that this sacrifice may be of the greatest benefit to my country. In leaving my beloved son to my people, I ask all Rumanians to surround him with the warmest and most complete love and loyalty, so that in them he may find the support of which he stands in need, having this heavy responsibility thrust upon his fragile shoulders. May God protect my country and vouchsafe it a proud future ! Long live Rumania ! "

While Carol slipped away across the frontier into Yugoslavia—as he went his

train windows were broken by bullets fired by extremists of the Iron Guard—Antonescu administered the oath of allegiance to King Michael and issued an appeal to the population to support their new sovereign. The young king's first act was to sign decrees setting the same limits to his prerogatives as his father had agreed to 36 hours earlier. Then a message was dispatched to the Axis Powers expressing Rumania's continued loyalty to the Vienna Award. A new cabinet was formed by Antonescu on September 15; all its members were professedly non-party men, with the exception of five who belonged to the Iron Guard. One of the five was its leader, M. Horea Sima. His day of notoriety was soon to dawn—in December, when the Iron Guard under his leadership rose against Antonescu in murderous riot.

Having aggrandized his Hungarian satellite at the expense of his puppet Rumania—having driven yet another nail into the coffin of that Versailles settlement which through the years has been his bête noire—Hitler remembered Asia. Perhaps he had at length come to suspect that America might mean business in her promise of full aid to the democracies; perhaps he was already meditating his onslaught on Russia. In either case, it would be distinctly to his advantage to have Japan not only as a sympathizer but as a full partner. So at Berlin on September 27 was staged another great conference, this time between the plenipotentiaries of Germany, Italy, and Japan. Their deliberations were short, since the ground had been well prepared beforehand. At noon a military, political and economic pact was signed between the three states in the Ambassadors' Hall at the Chancellery by von Ribbentrop and Ciano, Foreign Ministers of the Axis Powers, and M. Kurusu, Japanese Ambassador in Berlin. After the signature Hitler formally greeted the plenipotentiaries.

The Pact's terms ran:

1. Japan recognizes and respects the leadership of Germany and Italy in the establishment of a new order in Europe.

2. Germany and Italy recognize and respect the leadership of Japan in the establishment of a new order in East Asia.

3. Germany, Italy and Japan agree to cooperate in their efforts on the aforesaid lines. They further undertake to assist one another with all political, economic, and military means when one of the three contracting parties is attacked by a Power at present not involved in the European war or in the Sino-Japanese conflict.

4. With a view to implementing the present Pact, joint technical commissions, the members of which are to be appointed by Germany, Italy, and Japan, will meet without delay.

5. Germany, Italy, and Japan affirm that the terms do not in any way affect the political status which exists at present as between each of the three contracting parties and Soviet Russia.

6. The present Pact shall come into effect immediately upon signature, and shall remain in force 10 years from the date of its coming into force. In due time before the expiration of the said term, the high contracting parties shall, at the request of any of them, enter into negotiations for its renewal.

Following the signature of the Pact Ribbentrop read a long statement on behalf of the Reich Government. Ever since the National Socialist revolution of 1933, he said, it had been the aim of the Reich Government

"to obtain by peaceful understanding those revisions which were necessary not only to eliminate the injustices of the Treaty of Versailles but to serve to establish a new and permanent regime for the nations of Europe."

As one of those nations, he went on, Germany felt herself entitled to a share of the good things of this earth and to the power to administer them in so far as they were formerly her property. The National Socialist Government was resolved to assure to the German people their rights of existence within a suitable living space at a time when other nations had seen fit to claim whole continents for themselves. This determination of the German Government coincided with that of other nations which, like Germany, had been denied their rightful place in the world.

"A situation which had become impossible is now breaking down under the blows dealt by the nations which were attacked—great nations to whom so far a share in the enjoyment of the goods of this earth has been denied, but who now intend finally and definitely to secure equality of rights by virtue of the highest of all earthly rights.

GERMANS ESTABLISHED IN RUMANIA

After the coup d'état of General Antonescu, which resulted in the abdication of King Carol and the adhesion of Rumania to the Axis, German military domination of the country became increasingly clear. By early October, when this photograph was taken, German A.A. guns were established in the oilfields.

Photo, Associated Press



This struggle is therefore not directed against other nations but against the resistance of an international conspiracy which has already once before succeeded in plunging the world into bloody conflict."

The Tripartite Pact which, continued Hitler's Foreign Minister, had just been signed constituted a solemn affirmation of partnership between the three countries in a changing world. "The purpose of the Pact is to secure a new order of things in those parts of Europe at present engaged in war, and to establish that new order under the common leadership of Germany and Italy; it secures also a new order in Greater Asia under the leadership of Japan. The Pact is based not only on friendship but on a community of interests of three nations striving for the same social ideals." It was not directed against any other nation but exclusively against "the warmongers and irresponsible elements in the world which, against the true interest of the nations, seek to extend and prolong the war," and he was careful to assert that the new agreement affected in no way the status and relations already existing or developing between the contracting parties and Soviet Russia.

"The pact which has just been signed," he concluded, "is a military alliance between three of the mightiest States of the world. It serves the cause of a just order of things, both in Europe and in Greater Asia. But its main purpose is to restore peace to the world as quickly as possible. Every State, therefore, which meets this bloc in the desire to make its own contribution to the restoration of peace will be sincerely and gratefully welcomed and will be invited to cooperate in the political and economic reorganization of the world.

"Any State, however, which endeavours to interfere in the final phase of the solution of problems in Europe and the Far East by attacking one of the three Powers signatory to the Pact will have to meet the combined strengths of three nations, numbering 250,000,000 inhabitants. Therefore this Pact will in every way promote the restoration of peace."

In the light of after events Ribbentrop's reference to Soviet Russia and the clause (Clause 5) of the Pact which carefully preserved the status quo as regards the signatories and the Soviet, had a significance—an ominous significance—which was not fully appreciated at the time. All the same, there could be little doubt that Clause 3 had its application not only to the U.S.A. but to Soviet Russia. Japan, it was made clear, had no need to fear an attack by her Russian neighbour, since Russia was given to understand that if she attacked Japan, then Japan's allies in Europe would attack her in the west. Moreover, America was told as plainly as possible within the bounds of diplomatic language that if she chose to enter the war on the side of Britain, then she would be assailed by Germany, Italy, and Japan.

So far from being intimidated, however, the U.S.A. regarded the Pact as a challenge, and on every hand there were demands for still stronger action to be taken against the aggressors. There was not the slightest suggestion that America's war effort should be diverted—as the Axis no doubt hoped—to the satisfaction of her own needs in view of the threat against her Pacific seaboard. Rather the belief was intensified that Britain was fighting America's war as well as her own, and that it was up to America to give her all the assistance in her power.

Meanwhile, German penetration of the Balkans was proceeding apace. Rumania was so weakened and broken that she could not resist any further claims even if she had wished to do so. Early in October the Rumanian Legation in Berlin announced that German troops had been sent to Rumania in accordance with an agreement between the two governments designed to reorganize the Rumanian Army with all the equipment essential for modern warfare. At first German officials professed to know nothing of this fresh penetration, but soon it became impossible to deny any longer the presence of German troops in Rumania.

In reply to the protests of H.M. Minister in Bucharest, Sir Reginald Hoare, the Rumanian Government was evasive, although it was admitted that about 3,000 German troops were expected. There could be little doubt, however, that a much larger number had actually arrived and were in the process of occupying the most vital strategic points in Rumania. Sir Reginald Hoare continued his protests, but for the present it was not deemed advisable to break off relations between Britain and Rumania, nor was any heed given to the frequently-expressed demand that the R.A.F. should bomb the Rumanian oilfields—so largely developed by British capital and enterprise—before they were completely incorporated in the Nazi system.

Germans Enter Rumania

Russia watched the German penetration of the country which for many years had been regarded as being in her sphere of influence with considerable concern, and on October 15 the official Tass Agency denied a report published in a Danish newspaper that the Soviet Union had not been informed in advance by Germany of the latter's intention to send troops into Rumania. In Yugoslavia the Premier, M. Tsvetkovitch, called upon his countrymen to show national unity, and gave a warning that Yugoslavia would not surrender any of the territories which she had won by her own sacrifices; while in Turkey there was talk of the "two million bayonets" which were ready to repel all attempts at the infringement of her integrity.

Their turn had not yet come, however; Bulgaria had first to be dealt with, and Bulgaria was soon penetrated



HITLER AND MUSSOLINI MEET AT THE BRENNER

On October 4, 1940, the two Axis leaders met at Brennero, the Italian town on the Austro-Italian frontier where the Brenner Pass takes road and railway over the Alps. On the right, facing Mussolini, is Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister. The conference took place in an armoured train given to Mussolini by Hitler.

Photo, Associated Press

with the same deadly efficiency as Rumania had been a few weeks before. On October 17 the Bulgarian Government denied that there were any German troops in the country, but from many sources there came reports of German "tourists" who, there could be little doubt, were arriving with some other object than to enjoy the natural beauties of the country. Not until November 19 was it revealed in Sofia, the Bulgarian capital, that King Boris, accompanied by the German Minister in Sofia, had paid Hitler a "private visit" at Berchtesgaden on September 19. At this meeting it was understood that the political new order in Europe had been discussed.



HUNGARY SIGNS THE AXIS THREE-POWER MILITARY PACT

In the Belvedere Palace at Vienna, on November 20, 1940, Count Csaky signed a Protocol declaring Hungary's adherence to the Three-Power Pact of September 27. At the table, left to right, are Kurusu, Japanese Ambassador to Berlin; Teleki, Hungarian Prime Minister; Ribbentrop (standing); Ciano, Italian Foreign Minister; and Csaky, Hungarian Foreign Minister.

Photo, E.N.A.

As yet, however, Hitler did not demand Bulgaria's adhesion to the Tripartite Pact; perhaps he was not yet sufficiently sure of Russia's reactions, or fully prepared to meet them. Three other of his satellite states, nevertheless, adhered to the Pact at this time. On November 20 Count Csaky signed in the Belvedere Palace in Vienna a protocol binding Hungary to the Tripartite Pact. As usual, Ribbentrop expressed himself at considerable length. Hungary, he said, was the first power to declare her willingness and her desire to be allowed to join the Three-Power Pact, and the three powers granted her wish and expressed their willingness to accept Hungary as the first power to join the Pact. The purposes of the powers united under the Pact, he said, were: the establishment of a just world order, and a long-term stabilization of such an order; a challenge to the warmongers and to all powers that stand for the extension of the war instead of peace; and the creation of an alliance directed to the speedy restoration of world peace. Further powers, he went on, would join in this "world-wide unity of the young powers who are genuinely prepared for sacrifice and who desire a just peace."

Satellites of the Axis Pact

The following week-end Rumania followed Hungary's example. General Antonescu, after a visit to Rome, arrived in Berlin, and on November 23 signed his country's adhesion to the German - Italian - Japanese - Hungarian Pact. The protocol to which he put his signature declared that Rumanian representatives would be invited to attend the discussions of the joint technical committees in the event of Rumanian interests being affected. Hardly had he left Berlin when Dr. Tuka, the Slovak Prime Minister, arrived in the German capital to sign in his turn.

Thus on paper the Three-Power Pact was now a six-power one. The general policy of the alliance was to be decided by the three major powers; Hungary, Rumania and Slovakia, and any other country which might be permitted to join later, were to be content with representation on the technical committees, and to be allowed to have a say when matters affecting their interest were discussed.

There was another visitor to Berlin that same month. On November 12 M. Molotov, Soviet Premier and Foreign Commissar, accompanied by M. Dekanchoff, Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, arrived in Berlin at the invitation of the German Government. At the Anhalter Station they were given a state reception and met by Ribbentrop, Himmler, Ley, and Field-Marshal Keitel, and later in the day Molotov had conversations with Ribbentrop and a two-and-a-half-hour interview with Hitler. Nothing was published of what was said or even what was on the agenda, but the organ of the German Foreign Office, the "Diplomatische Politische Korrespondenz," stated that Molotov's visit was the logical outcome of the evolution of the European situation and the signing of the Tripartite Pact by Germany, Italy and Japan, and that it aimed at the establishment of a basis for the political and economic collaboration of the Soviet Union with the Axis Powers, and eventually with Japan, and the reconsideration of the German-Soviet agreement of 1939 with a view to the still more extensive collaboration of the two states.

On the next day Molotov, accompanied by his industrial experts, saw Goering, chief of the Reich's industrial effort, and had further conversations with Hitler and Ribbentrop; and in the evening he gave a reception which was attended by prominent German industrialists. When he left for Moscow on November 14 the official German communiqué stated that the exchange of views had taken place in an

atmosphere of mutual confidence, and that all important questions of interest to Rumania and the Soviet Union had been settled.

What actually happened at the meeting was not revealed until some seven months had elapsed. Then, on June 22, 1941, in Hitler's statement to the German people announcing his decision to make war upon Russia, he declared that the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs had asked a number of questions at the November meeting. He had asked if the German guarantee to Rumania was directed against Soviet Russia in the case of an attack by Soviet Russia on Rumania, to which Hitler said he had replied that the German guarantee was a general one and unconditionally binding, but Russia had declared that she had no other interests in Rumania beyond Bessarabia. "The occupation of Northern Bukovina had already been a violation of this assurance. I did not therefore think that Russia could now suddenly have more far-reaching intentions against Rumania."

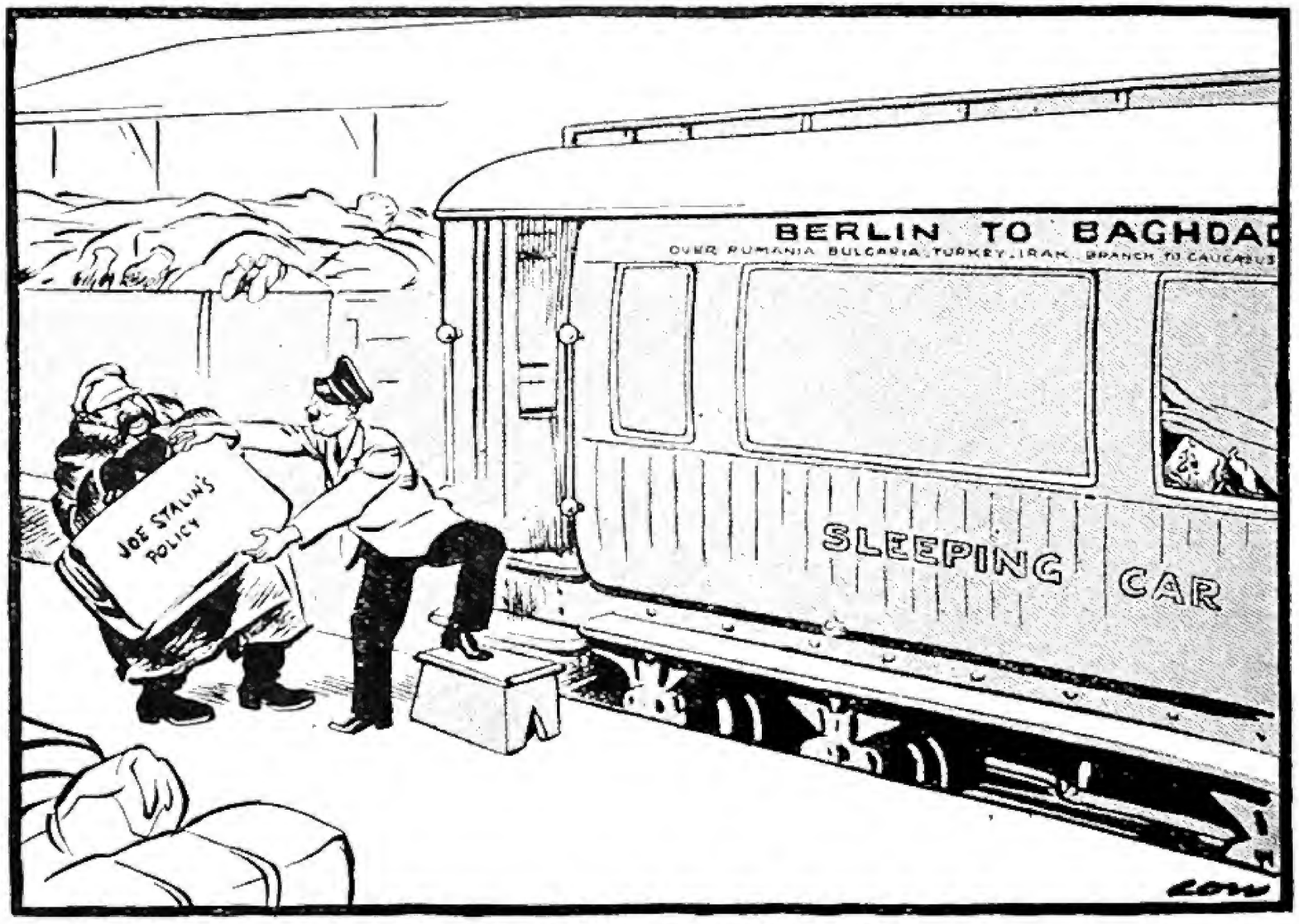
Molotov at Berlin

Secondly, Molotov had said that Russia felt menaced by Finland and she was determined not to tolerate this menace. Was Germany prepared to give Finland no assistance? Hitler replied that Germany had no political interests in Finland, but a new war against the little Finnish nation would be regarded as intolerable by the Reich Government, and more so as Russia could never be regarded as threatened by Finland. "At no price did we want to have a new war in the Baltic."

Molotov's third question was whether Germany would be prepared to allow Russia to give a guarantee to Bulgaria and for this purpose send Soviet troops to Bulgaria without, for example, having any intentions of overthrowing the monarchy. "My answer," said Hitler, was: "Bulgaria is a sovereign State and I did not know that the Bulgarians had asked Russia for a guarantee as the Rumanians had done in the case of Germany. The matter would in addition have to be discussed with my allies." Finally, Hitler reported Molotov as saying, "Soviet Russia above all needed an exit through the Dárdanelles and for her protection demanded the occupation of an important base on the Dardanelles or the Bosporus. Would Germany agree or not?" To which the Fuehrer replied that "Germany was prepared at any time to agree to a change in the Statute of Montreux in favour of the Black Sea states, and she was not prepared to agree to Russia occupying a base in the Straits."

Thus ran Hitler's account of what took place in the Berlin conversations on Nov. 12 and 13, 1940. Molotov's version might differ in this point or that, but in general there is little that is altogether unlikely in Hitler's account. Russia might well be seriously perturbed over Germany's penetration of the Balkans, where for generations the Slavs had been encouraged to regard Russia as their "big brother," but now the influence and prestige of the big brother were seriously diminished. Rumania and Bulgaria had already been absorbed in the Nazi new order; Yugoslavia was threatened.

As for the countries on the fringe of Slavdom, Turkey was becoming increasingly apprehensive of German designs, and Greece had been marked down for destruction. Already Italy had attacked her, and although for months the tide of war was to flow in her favour, before the following spring was out she was to be bloodily overborne.



A PROPHETIC CARTOON

Published in October, 1940, this drawing by Low was entitled 'Wait, Maybe I Don't Go! I Ain't So Sleepy.' *By courtesy of "The Evening Standard"*



MOLOTOV TAKES A COCKTAIL WITH HITLER

On November 12, 1940, Molotov was in Berlin and visited Hitler at the Chancellery. Relations, as suggested by this photograph of the Russian Foreign Commissar talking with Hitler and Ribbentrop, were apparently cordial; but in 1941 it was revealed by Hitler himself that Molotov had asked a number of awkward questions about the situation in the Balkans and the Baltic. *Photo, Keystone*

Chapter 124

ITALY INVADES GREECE: THE FIRST FIVE WEEKS OF THE CAMPAIGN

Mussolini's Ultimatum—Greece Invokes the British Guarantee—Italians Cross Greco-Albanian Frontier—Three Invading Columns—Greek Counter-Attack in the North—British Aid : Imperial Troops Land in Crete—R.A.F. Enter the Conflict—Greeks Destroy Alpini Division—Italians Evacuate Koritza and Retreat in Disorder—Steady Greek Advance Along a Wide Front

At 3 a.m. on October 28, 1940, the Italian Minister in Athens, Signor Grazzi, called on General Metaxas, Greece's Dictator-Premier, and in lame and halting phrases presented what was in effect an ultimatum. He produced a list of Italian grievances, the groundlessness of which none could know better than he. It was alleged that the Greek Government had allowed its territorial waters and its coasts and ports to be used by the British Fleet in the course of war operations, and had favoured supplies to the "alien British forces"; it was also accused of having permitted the British Secret Service to organize a service of military information in the Greek Archipelago. "The Italian Government does not refer only to the British guarantee to Greece, but also to the secret explicit and precise undertakings of the Greek Government to place at the disposal of Britain air bases in the provinces of Thessalonica and Macedonia for use in an attack against Albanian territory." Then the Italian went on to refer to the "terrorist policy" which had been adopted towards the population of Ciamuria, the former Albanian region which was annexed to Greece in 1913, and to the alleged continued attempts on the part of Greek officials to create disorder in the Albanian frontier zone. These provocations, he went on, could not possibly be tolerated any longer by Italy; hence the Italian Government requested the Greek Government, as a guarantee of Greek neutrality and of Italian security, to allow Italian forces to occupy for the duration of the war certain strategic points on Greek territory. Signor Mussolini expressed the hope that this occupation would not be opposed, but if any resistance were encountered, then it would be put down by force of arms.

What were the strategic points Italy demanded? asked General Metaxas. Signor Grazzi hummed and hawed and then had to admit that he did not know. In other words, the Italians were requiring that the whole of Greece should be opened to their troops. The message was, indeed, as General Metaxas said, an ultimatum, a declaration of war, and the demand was rejected out of hand. Even while Grazzi and Metaxas were still in conference, the Italian troops were on the march, and at several points they had crossed from Albania into Greece.

Later in the morning the Greek Government sent an appeal to Britain to honour the guarantee given by Mr. Chamberlain on April 13, 1939, and the appeal was as swiftly answered. "We are with you in this struggle," telegraphed King George to his cousin, King George of the Hellenes; "your cause is our cause; we shall be fighting against a common foe." Mr. Churchill in a message to General Metaxas also spoke words of encouragement. "Italy has found threats and intimidation of no avail against your calm courage. She has therefore resorted to unprovoked aggression against your country, seeking justification for a wanton attack in baseless accusations. . . . We will give you all the help in our power. We fight a common foe, and we will share a united victory."

Britain Honours Guarantee

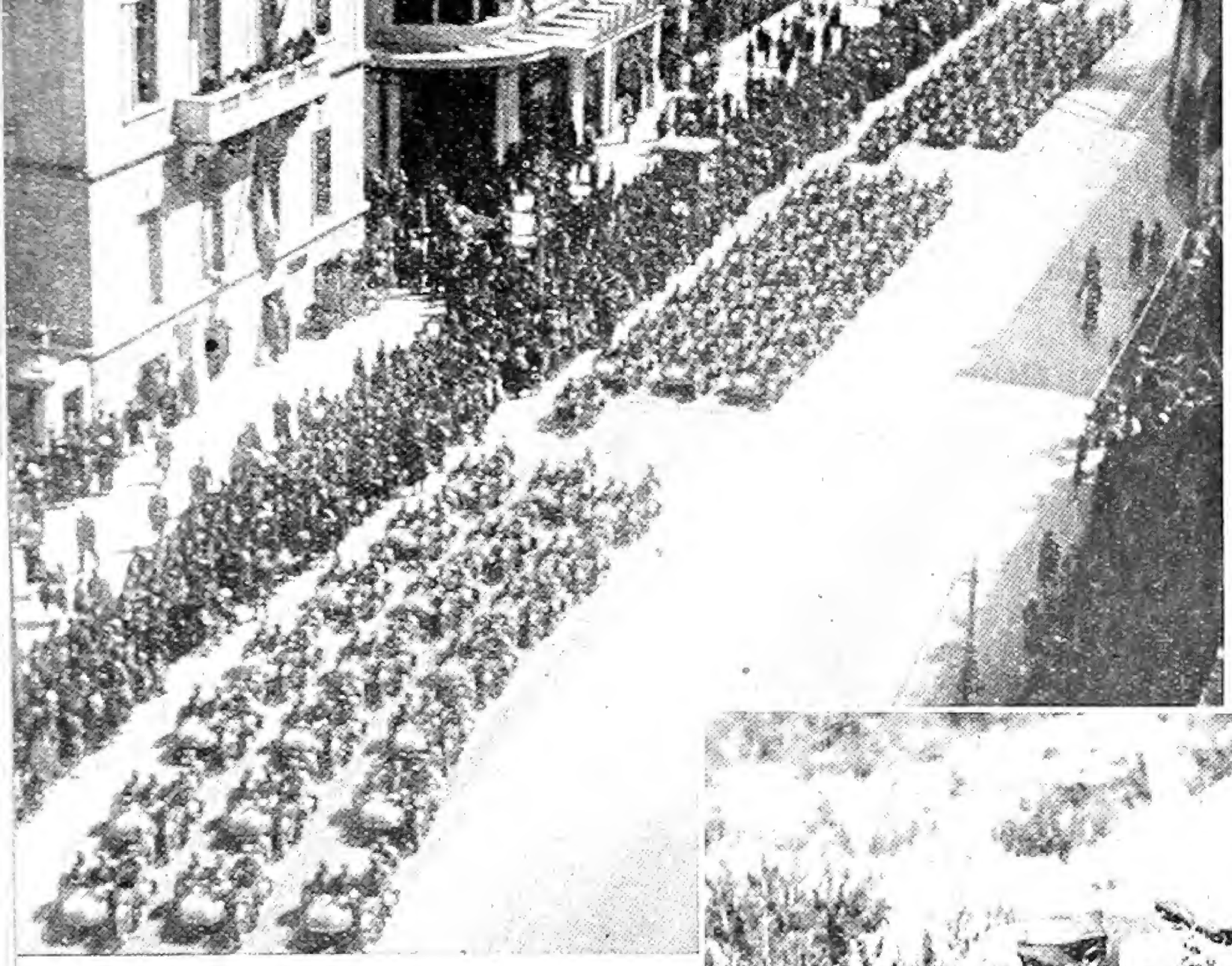
Meanwhile, King George and General Metaxas had signed orders for a general

KING GEORGE OF GREECE HOLDS WAR COUNCIL

When Britain promised help to invaded Greece at the end of October, 1940, a mission led by Maj.-Gen. M. D. Gambier Parry was sent to Athens the following week. In this photograph of an Anglo-Greek War Council held in Athens shortly afterwards the personalities are, left to right : Maj.-Gen. Gambier Parry ; Gen. Metaxas, Greek Prime Minister ; King George of Greece ; Air Vice-Marshal J. H. D'Albiac, A.O.C. in Greece ; and Gen. Papagos, Greek C.-in-C.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright







GREEK TROOPS IN TOWN AND FIELD

Top left, Greek troops, motor-cycle units, passing through Athens on mobilization in October, 1940. Above, Evzones, Greek kilted troops who are the equivalent of Highland troops, in the line. They fought throughout with notable bravery and initiative, and their military efficiency gave the Italians unwelcome surprises.

Photos, British Paramount News; Black Star

mobilization. "At this great moment," said Greece's king, "I am sure that every Greek man and woman will do their duty to the end and will show themselves worthy of the glorious history of Greece"; while General Metaxas, after urging the nation to stand up and fight for fatherland, wives and children and for their sacred traditions, concluded with the historic words used by the Greeks on the eve of the battle of Salamis in 480 B.C.: "Now above all the battle."

So little Greece entered the war—little Greece, so small in territory, so few in numbers, so weak in many of the things that make for success in modern war, yet so strong in spirit. Reservists swarmed to their depots at Athens and Larissa, Salonika and Kavalla, and the Army, under the command of Lt.-Gen. Alexander Papagos, who had been responsible for the supervision of the defences in the north—the so-called Metaxas Line—took up its battle positions on the frontier. The Greek Air Force, though it consisted of only 150 to 200 'planes all told and now had to be matched against Italy's more than 2,000 aircraft of the first line, assumed the offensive; and on the sea the Greek Navy—the thirty-year-old armoured cruiser "Averoff," some 20 destroyers and torpedo boats, and a half-dozen submarines—put out to sea to join the British Fleet now operating in Greek waters against the main foe.

Papagos Assumes Command

After crossing the frontier from Albania in the early morning of Monday, October 28, the Italians advanced in three main columns, one heading for Florina in the north-west of Greece on the road to Salonika, the second making for Janina in Epirus, while the third moved along the coast south-west from Konispolis, probably with a view to outflanking the Greeks in the mountains, and also to preventing reinforcements being sent to Corfu, for many years one of Mussolini's most coveted objectives.

For a day or two the invasion continued, and in their first communiqué, issued on October 31, the Italians claimed to have reached the little river Kalamas, representing a gain of perhaps ten miles. That was about the extent of their progress, for on November 1 the Greeks delivered a strong counter-offensive in the north. The advance on Florina was not only halted; the invader became the invaded as considerable detachments of Greek troops crossed the frontier into Albania and drove towards Koritza, a town with a population of 22,000 and the advanced supply base of the Italian Army.

The news of the Greek success was contained in a communiqué issued on November 2. "In the Florina sector," it read, "our troops, having smashed strong enemy resistance, penetrated five kilometres into Albanian territory and occupied fortified positions at the point of the bayonet. We have taken prisoner nine officers and 153 men, and have captured 100 animals." The troops chiefly responsible were the famous kilted Evzones, who scaled the heights in swift secrecy and so took the enemy completely by surprise. At the same time Italian dismounted cavalry, two regiments of which had crossed the marshy plain close to the sea until they reached the Kalamas, were thrown back by a Greek counter-attack. If the Italians could claim any victory it was in the air, since, until the R.A.F. could come to their aid, the Greeks were heavily outnumbered. The communiqué quoted above went on to describe how "the enemy's air attacks were directed chiefly against the civilian population. Thirteen towns and villages have been bombed and machine-gunned. It is estimated that 90 people were killed and 209 wounded among the civilian population. Several houses

have been destroyed, including two clinics and one school. The Italian aeroplanes which bombed Corfu bore Greek markings."

Salonika was heavily raided on November 1, 40 people being killed and 80 wounded, all civilians, and many fires started in the harbour and amongst the shipping. This was one of several raids, and in one of the earliest Count Ciano's "Disperata" squadron was engaged; the Italian Foreign Minister's activity in this unusual sphere was immediately signalized by his promotion to a lieutenant-colonel of aviation. The "honours" of the day were also shared by Mussolini's sons, Vittorio and Bruno.

Outnumbered though the Greeks were, their aircraft nevertheless made several successful reconnaissance flights and bombed Koritza from a low altitude, as well as concentrations of Italian motorized units in the Epirus sector.

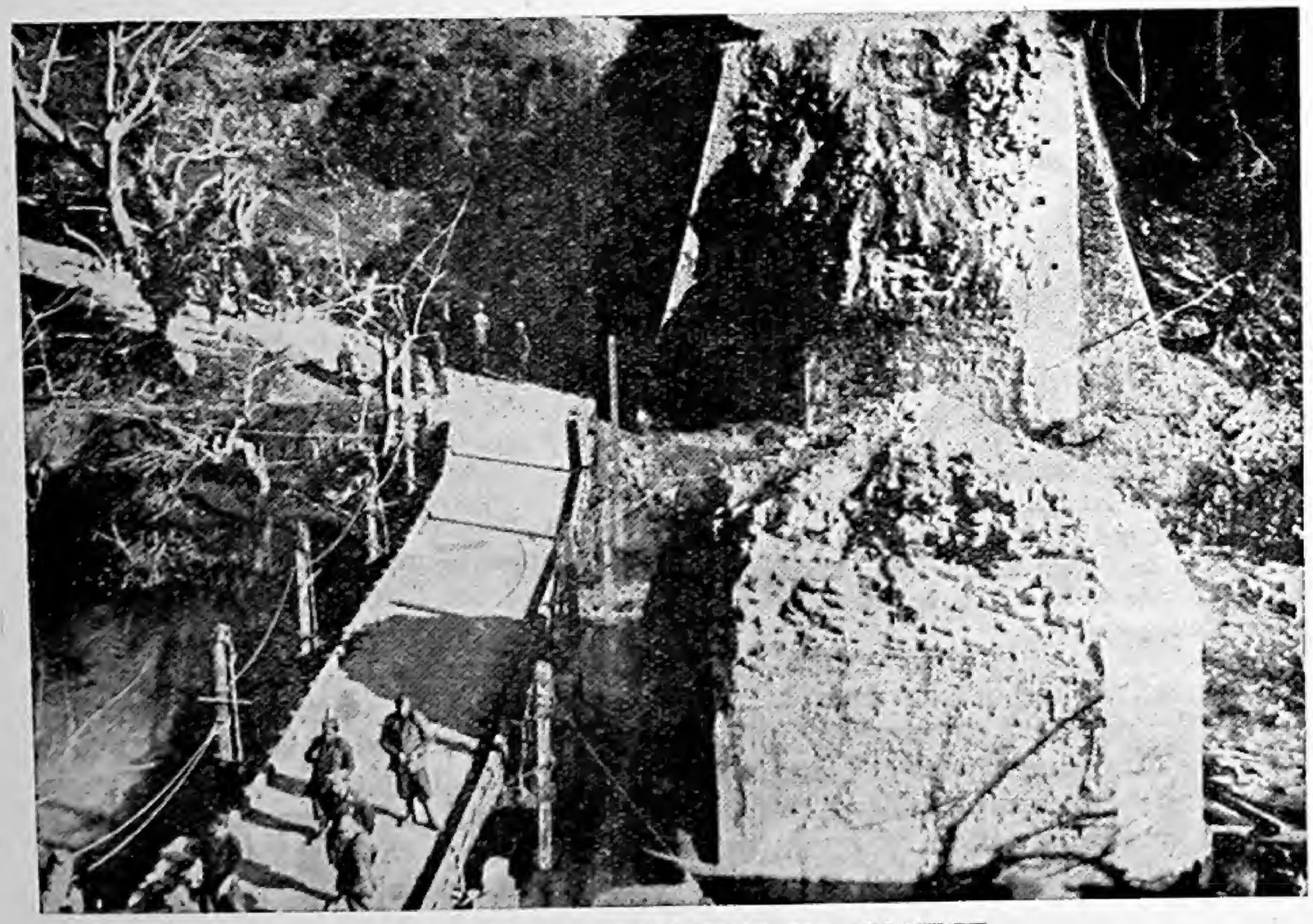
By now the Greeks were not fighting alone. On November 3 Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, broadcast the declaration that Britain would honour her pledge to the Greeks. "The Navy is there, and air support is being given. Military objectives in Naples have been bombed and British troops landed in Greek territory. What we can do we will do." A British mission, led by Major-General Gambier Parry, including military, naval, and air attachés, arrived in Athens during the week-end, and there came the news that British troops had landed in Crete.

British Land in Crete

As the men of this new B.E.F. came ashore in Suda Bay they received a vociferous welcome from the Greek shepherds, shopkeepers and fishermen, who poured down to the waterfront and cheered wildly as the soldiers, in full war kit, were landed from British warships. Gifts of fruit and nuts, fresh milk and wine, were showered upon them, and in a very short time the newcomers had made themselves comfortable in a land whose hills and fields made a pleasant and welcome contrast with the sandy deserts of Egypt they had just left. Though the weather was calm and the landing was made in daylight, the Italians did nothing to hinder it. But a day or two later Italian bombers flew from Rhodes and dropped bombs in the neighbourhood of Candia and Canea and near the warships assembled in Suda Bay. They were soon driven off, however, by the ships' anti-aircraft guns.

To Greece itself went a number of squadrons of the R.A.F., with ancillary units, under the command of Air Commodore (later Air Vice-Marshal) J. H. D'Albiac, D.S.O. Day followed day and the fighting in the frontier zone continued. Particularly hard was the struggle in the mountainous, wooded regions of the Central Pindus. Here, at Smolika and Gramos, the Third Alpini division, one of the Italian crack divisions, reinforced by cavalry, Bersaglieri, and Fascist militia formations, met disaster between October 28 and November 10.

Supported by strong forces of artillery and tanks, the Alpini attempted to dash across the mountains and seize Metsovo,

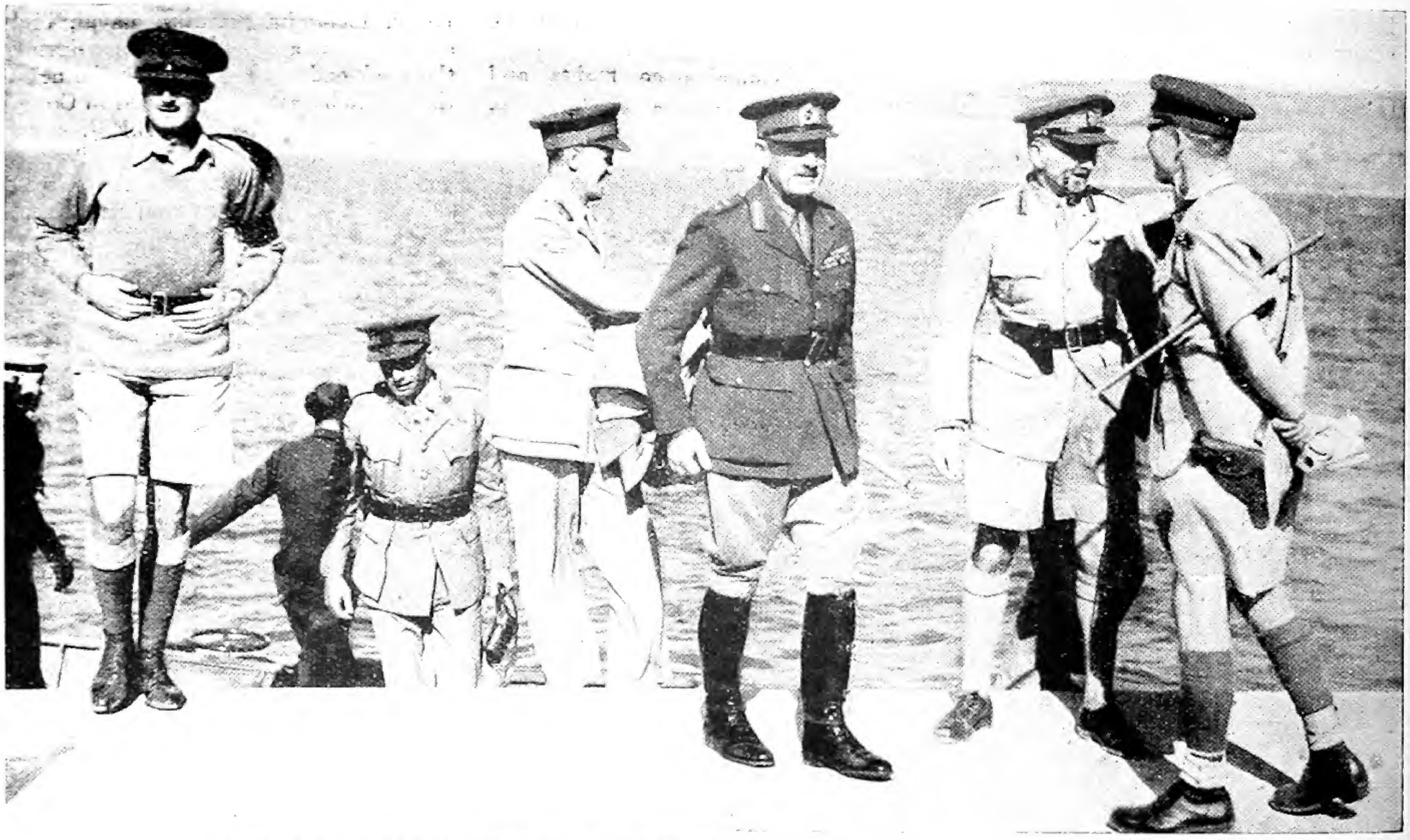


ITALIAN AGGRESSION IN GREECE

Below is a photograph of Italian troops crossing the Greek frontier from Albania on October 28, 1940, a few hours after the Italian Minister in Athens had delivered the vague but entirely aggressive demands of his master. Above, a bridge built by Italian engineers in the Epirus, in the first days of November, to replace one blown up by the Greeks.

Photos, Associated Press; Wide World





GENERAL WAVELL COMES TO GREECE

General Sir Archibald Wavell, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Middle East, arrived in Greece towards the end of November, 1940. In this historic photo he is seen landing from the flying-boat in which he made the journey. His purpose was to increase British aid to the gallant Greeks.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

thus blocking the road across the Pindus which connects Larissa and Janina, thereby isolating the Greeks in Epirus from those in Eastern Greece and turning the Janina defences. They made some progress down the Sarantaporo and Aeos valleys, and as the enemy advanced the Greek light covering forces withdrew before them. The Italians were enticed ever deeper into the mountainous gorges, and for a week the northern entrance to the Aeos valley was deliberately left open by the Greeks, so that more and more of the enemy might be lured into the trap.

While the Italians were making their way along the rough mountain tracks, the Greeks were being steadily reinforced, and night after night little bodies of Greek soldiers clambered into position on the lofty peaks which dominated the gorges along whose bottoms, several thousands of feet below, the forces of the invaders were making their painful way.

Then, at the opportune moment, the Greeks launched their counter-attack. For days they fought with characteristic stubbornness over most difficult country in cold and rain, often going hungry because of the difficulty of obtaining their rations; such supplies and stores as reached them in their eyries were brought up with the aid of peasant women from the neighbouring villages. At length the fierce fighting came to an end; the enemy forces were completely overthrown and, in their haste to avoid being surrounded, they retreated in disorder, hotly pursued by the Greeks. In their mad rush down the gorges they carried away with them Italian reinforcements which had been landed at Valona, and which were being speeded in motor-lorries to the aid of their comrades.

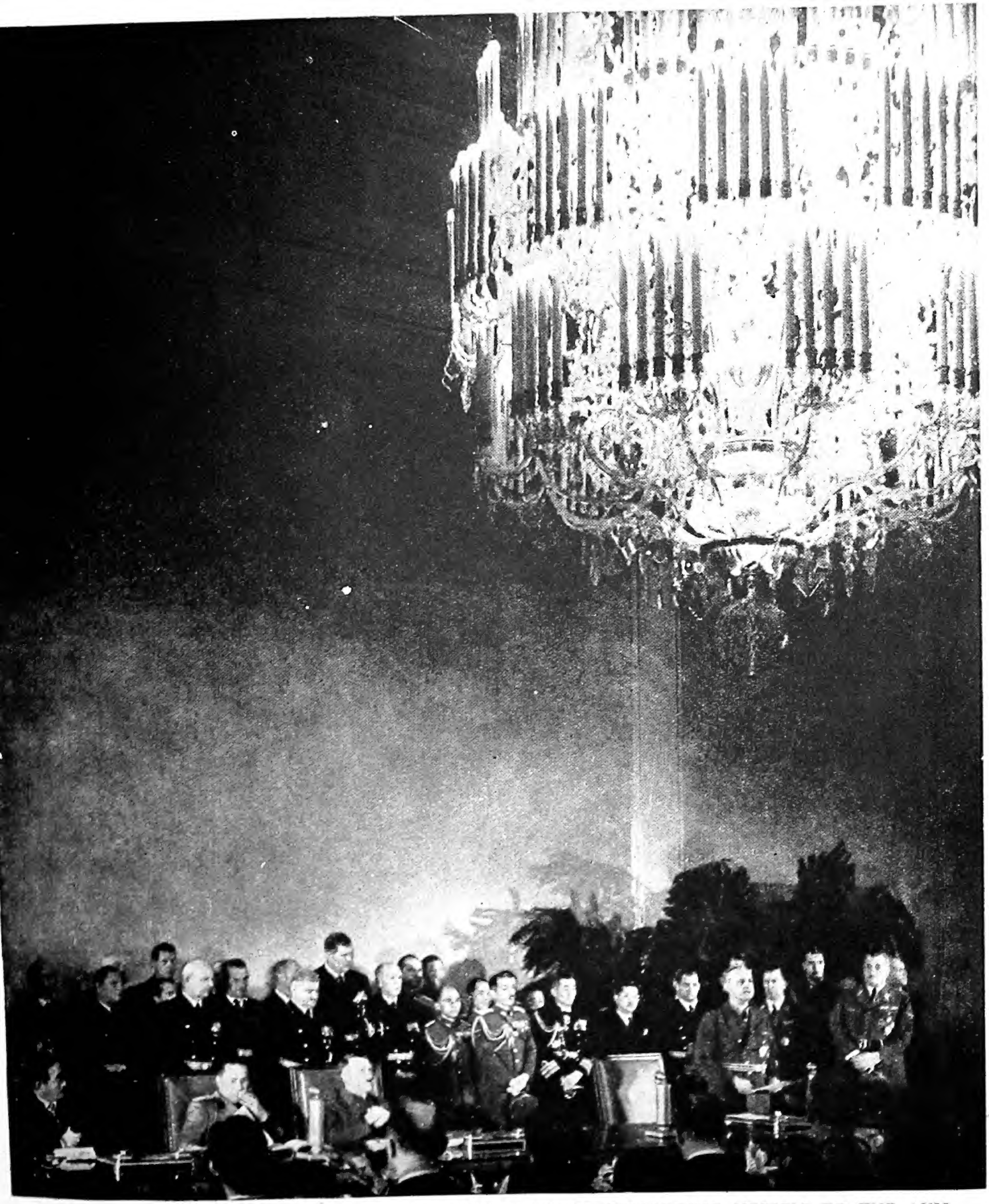
Whole platoons of the enemy flung away their arms and plunged into the mountain torrents, already considerably swollen by the autumn rains. Scores were swept away by the rushing stream before they could make the opposite bank, and were drowned. Hundreds more sought safety in flight across the mountains; and days afterwards the Greeks, patrolling the wooded heights, came upon heaps of enemy corpses already showing signs of having been mauled by mountain bears and wolves. Large numbers of prisoners were taken, and a great quantity of all sorts of war



ITALIAN GENERALS IN DISGRACE

So quickly and thoroughly did the Greeks turn the tables on their Italian invaders that Gen. Prasca (right) was, only fourteen days after war began, replaced in command by Gen. Soddu (left), the latter himself being superseded by Marshal Badoglio before November was out.

Photos, E.N.A.



JAPAN SIGNS THE THREE-POWER PACT PLEDGING HERSELF TO THE AXIS

Taking the first step of a tortuous course that was to involve her leaders in frequent difficulties, following Hitler's ever-changing foreign policy, Japan, on September 27, 1940, alined herself with Germany and Italy by signing a military, political and economic pact. Here is a photograph of the ceremony in the Reich Chancellery, Berlin: left to right (seated), Kurusu, Japanese Ambassador; Ciano, Italian Foreign Minister; Hitler; (standing) Ribbentrop, German Foreign Minister.

Photo, Associated Press







WHERE THE GREEKS TRIUMPHED IN THE ALBANIAN MOUNTAINS

The photographs above are from a Greek encampment in the snow-covered mountains of Albania. On the left, a sentry is guarding a Greek artillery position, the gun being inactive on account of heavy fog. On the right, Greek soldiers resting in a shelter captured from the Italians. Beneath, on the right, are Greek troops moving along an Albanian mountain road deep in snow, while the left-hand photograph shows a long Italian supply train advancing.

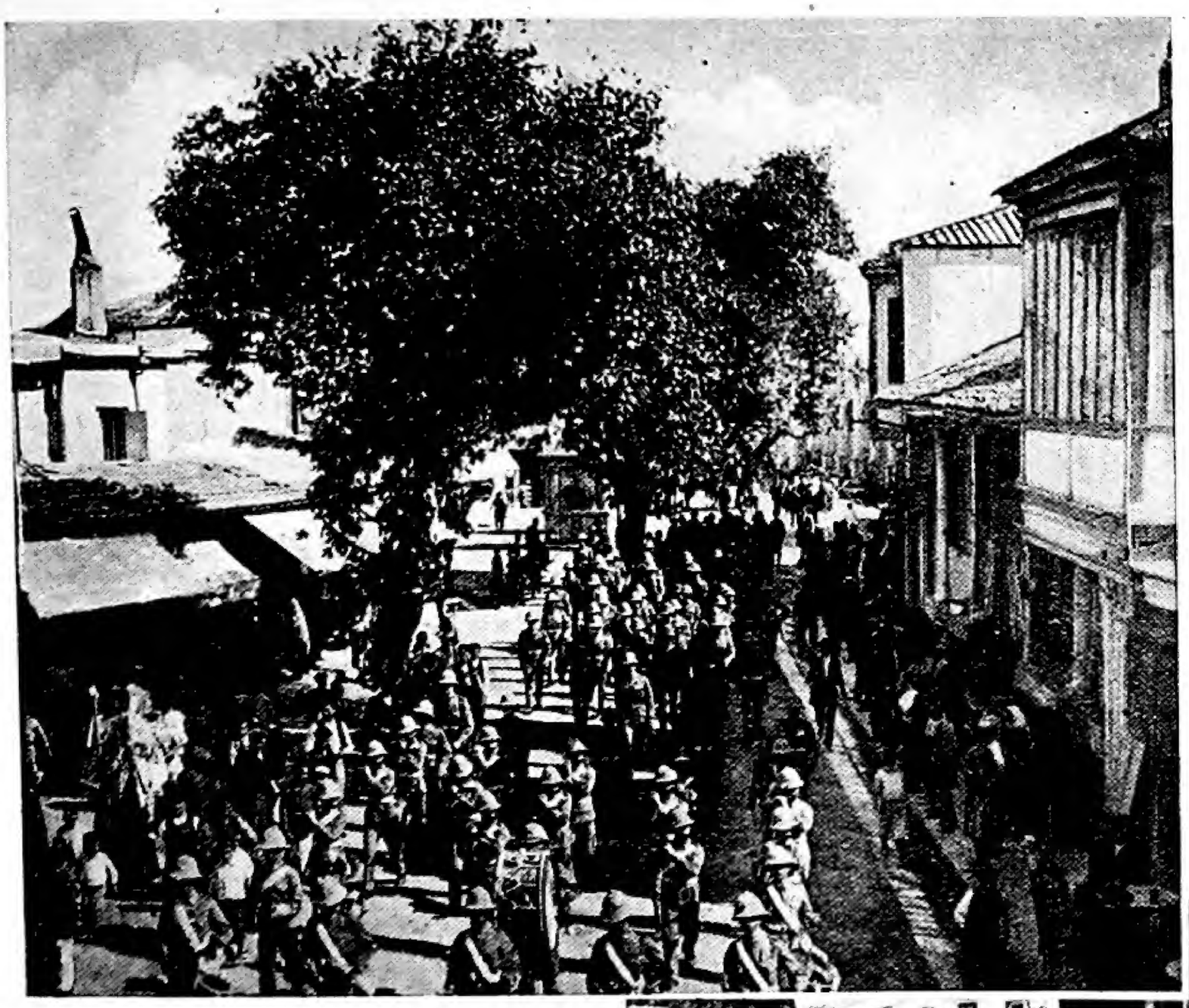
Photos, Bosshard : Associated Press



BISHOP OF CANEA BLESSING BRITISH ARMS ON THEIR ARRIVAL ON GREEK TERRITORY

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

It was on November 3, 1940, that Mr. A. V. Alexander broadcast the declaration that Britain would honour her pledge to the Greeks, and a British military mission led by Major-General Gambier Parry arrived in Athens that week-end. The knowledge that Britain was now fighting by their side against Mussolini's cruel and unprovoked aggression was received with great enthusiasm by the Greeks, and as our soldiers began to arrive on Greek soil there were scenes of pious jubilation. In this photograph the Bishop of Canea is seen blessing Bren-gun carriers and light tanks.

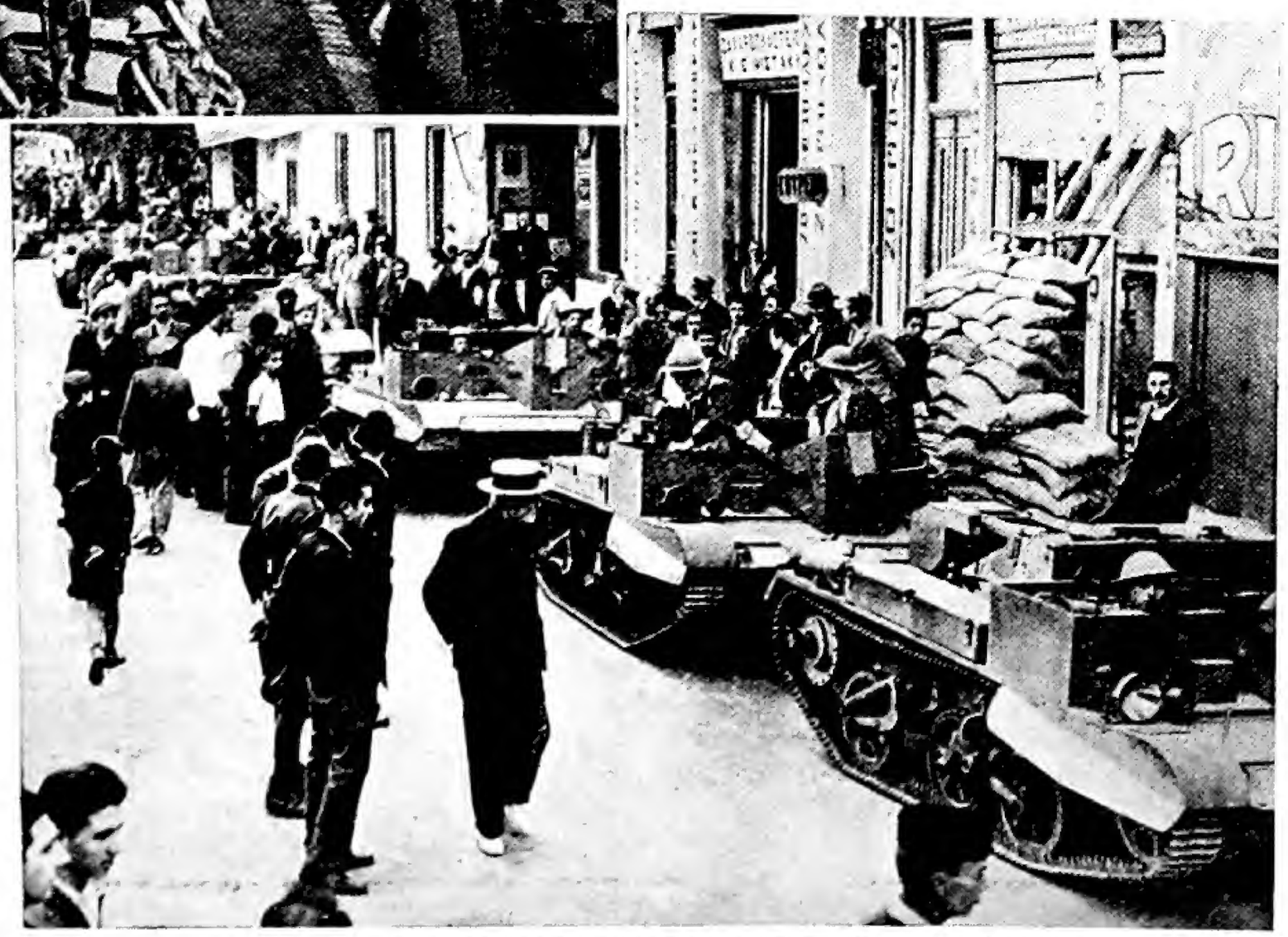


material fell into the hands of the victors. By November 10 the fighting was over; the Alpini division had been destroyed.

How serious was the defeat was evidenced by the dispatch to the front of General Soddu to take over command of the Italian troops operating there from Count Prasca. At the same time Generals Vercellino and Geloso were placed in command of the 9th and 11th Army Corps.

Now along practically the whole front the Greeks took the initiative, and so turned the tables completely on the aggressor. For days their highland troops, men who knew every inch of the ground and who were thoroughly acclimatized to the bitter weather encountered on these windswept and barren heights, worked steadily on across the mountain mass of Morova until they carried the heights above Koritza and thus brought the Italians' advanced supply base within range. With their mountain artillery and with some heavy guns which they had captured from the Italians, they dominated the enemy positions and the barracks and supply depots. Soon the Italians were seen to be evacuating the town, and fires from the burning houses and dumps illuminated the mountainsides. In this operation the Greeks received invaluable assistance from the 'planes of the R.A.F., which successfully bombed and machine-gunned the Italian

Italians Evacuate Koritza



BRITISH IN CRETE THIRTY-TWO YEARS AFTER

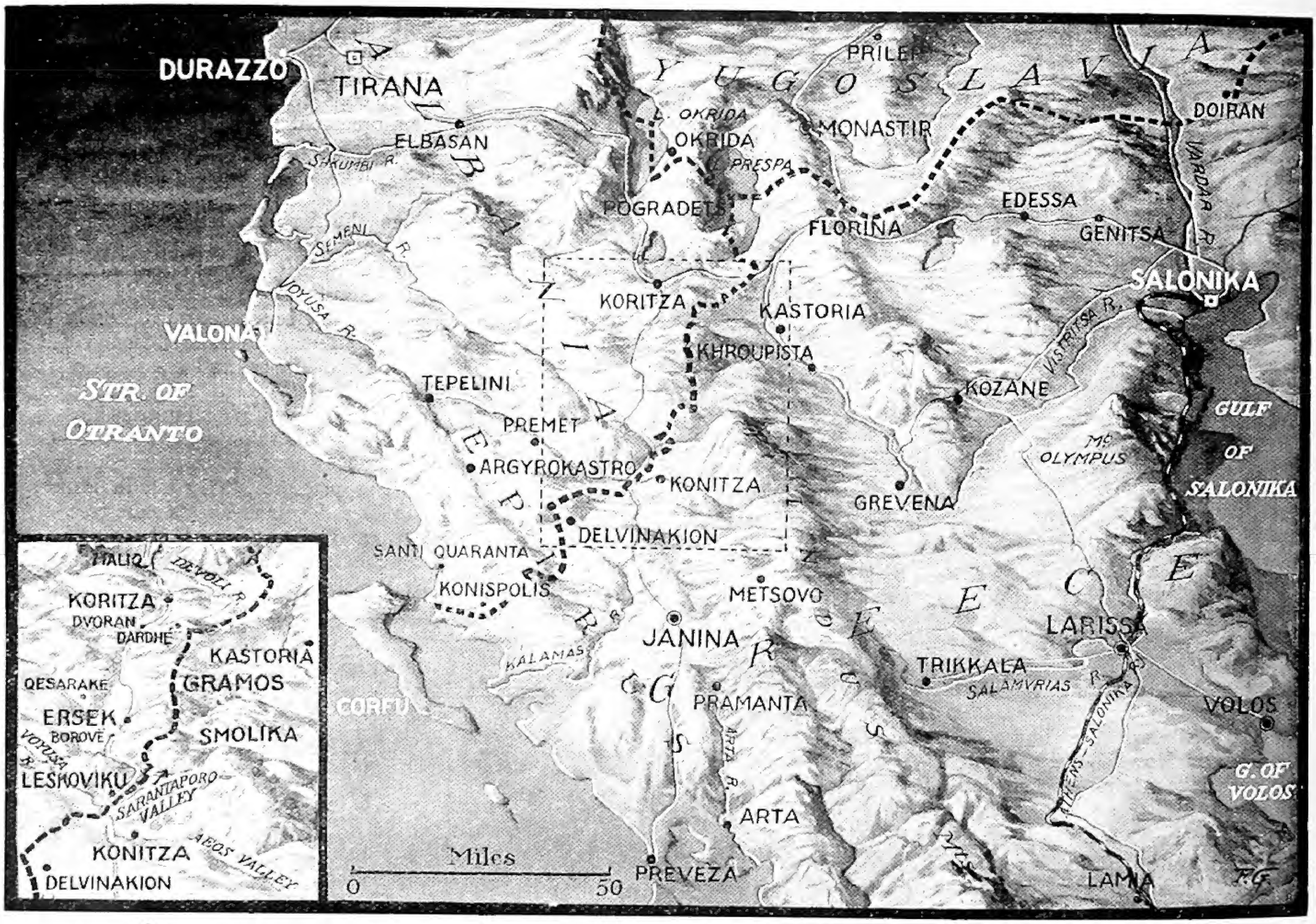
Top, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers marching through Candia in 1908 when, in concert with other Powers, Britain was endeavouring to pacify the island. In November, 1940, British troops set foot in Crete again, and were warmly welcomed by their Greek Allies. The Bren gun carriers with their steel-helmeted men seen here in a Cretan town, contrast forcibly with the soldiers of an earlier day carrying side-arms only. *Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; E.N.A.*

motor transport columns, a farmhouse which was being used as Italian Army headquarters, and an important bridge —that which carries the road from Koritza to Elbasan, across the little river Devoli, along which enemy reinforcements were being brought up.

"We dived on them from about 20,000 feet," said one of the British pilots, "and released our bombs dead over the column, which was pretty tightly packed. I saw one bomb burst right in the centre of a big lorry. The Italians were running like hares. Then we hit the bridge fair and square, completely wrecking it, and the Italian reinforcements, which had been using it, suffered heavily. "Altogether," he concluded, "it was a most successful day."

As the Italians fell back they lost heavily in men and material. Soon the Greek bag of prisoners numbered 3,500, and amongst the spoil were 24 cannon, 38 trench mortars, nearly 300 machine-guns, 367 lorries, nearly 1,000 mules and horses, and the flags of two regiments. After a long and weary march down the mountainside the prisoners were taken by train to Athens, where, as the trains disgorged them on to the platform, they made a sorry showing. Their uniforms were torn and covered with mud, and the plumes in their hats bedraggled and broken, so that there was nothing to suggest that these were men of some of Mussolini's finest regiments. So hungry-looking were they that the onlookers called out jestingly to the guards, "Look out, you fellows, or they will eat you!"

Some of the captives told stories worth the hearing. "Our Colonel told us," said one, "what we now know to be all lies, that General Metaxas had assured Count Ciano that the Italian Army had been given permission to



THE GREEK FRONT IN ALBANIA

The line of the valiant Greek offensive against the Italian armies extended from Lake Okrida in the north to Konispolis in the south. Here are the place-names—Argyrokastro, Koritza, Pogradets—which made modern Greek history equivalent in heroism to its ancient story. The portion outlined by dotted lines is enlarged below with extra details. The campaign "recalls the Classic age," Mr. Churchill wired to General Metaxas. "We are all inspired by this feat of Greek valour against an enemy so superior in numbers and equipment."

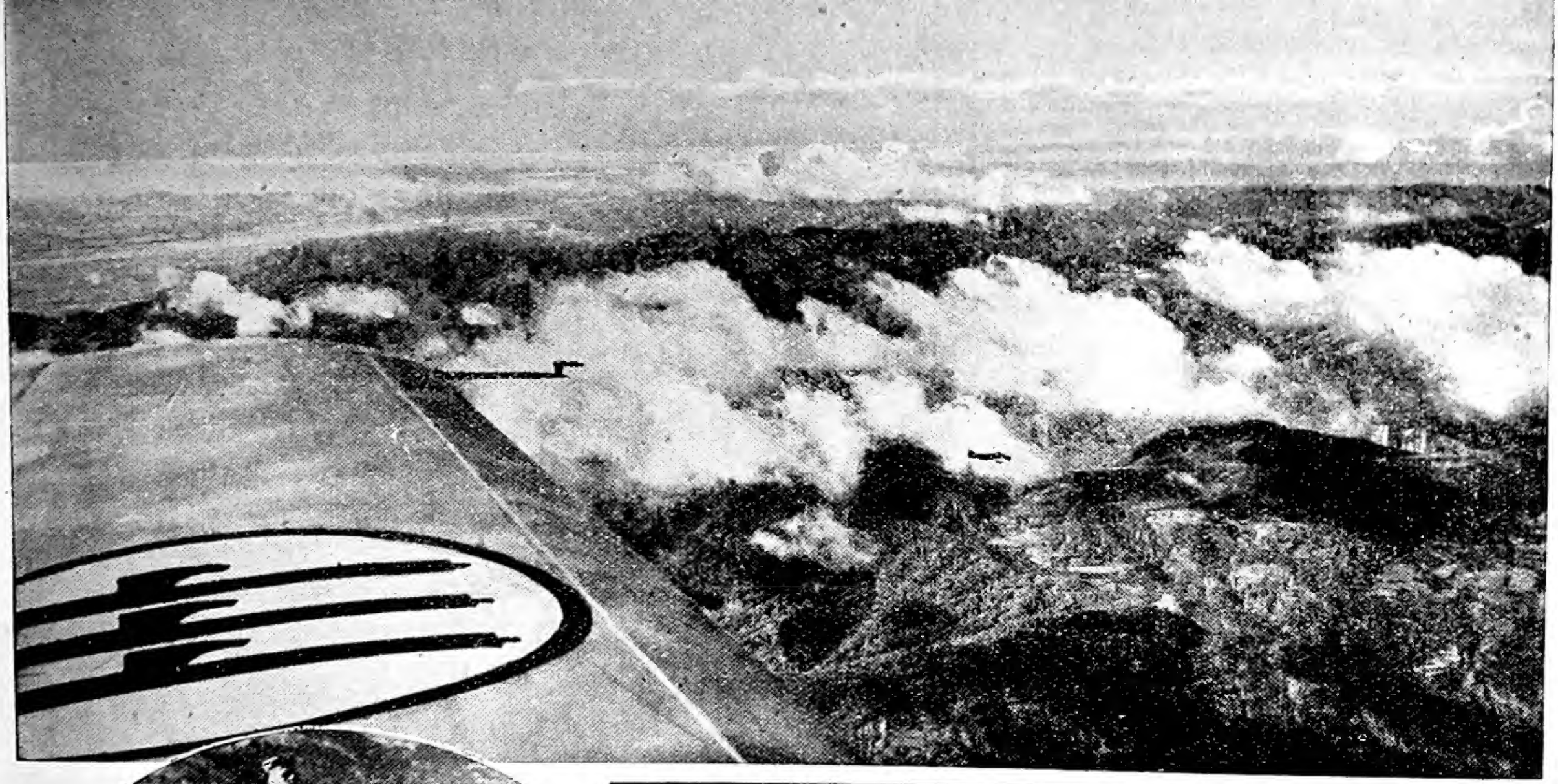
Relief map specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*

cross Greece and Yugoslavia, and that Greece would never oppose our might. With flags flying we marched at six o'clock in the morning. A terrible fire met us. The Greeks had trained their guns on the pass. We were unprepared and retreated in confusion. Next day we were surrounded by Greeks. I shall never forget those devils charging in skirts and yelling. I was captured in an unsuccessful counter-attack, which was ordered by our command to cover the retreat. The Albanians on our left panicked. Our own tanks shelled them in an attempt to stop the panic, which, however, spread along the whole line and caused it to fall back."

Another Italian officer spoke of moving forward into the mountains down deep defiles and along trails so narrow that even the mules lost their footing, and many of them slipped and crashed down over the edge: "that was an end of them and their packs too." When his column was half-way up a ravine on the Greek side of the frontier, the Greeks opened fire with rifles and machine-guns. "Taking what cover we could," he said, "we tried to reply, but the Greeks had chosen their positions too well. They had left us no targets that we could see. More machine-guns opened up. Even mounted guns were brought into action against us. It was impossible for us to try to advance farther; it was quite as impossible to retreat. Suffering heavy casualties, we defended ourselves as best we could, from morning to sundown. It was hopeless. So, in the end, we surrendered."

Swiftly the Italian retreat became a rout as the Greek centre, pushing over and beyond the Morova heights, drew ever nearer to Koritza. The whole Italian front was threatened with collapse, and the Italian Army, which, according to the time-table, should have been in Athens within a few days, was now in full retreat all along the front. It is easy to imagine Mussolini's disgust, his fuming rage. On November 18, the anniversary of the application of Sanctions against Italy in 1935, he addressed representatives of the Fascist Party in the Palazzo Venezia in Rome, and after a long political excursion found some excuses for the misfortunes that had overtaken the Italian arms. "The mountains of Epirus," he said, "and their muddy valleys do not lend themselves to lightning warfare, as the people who practise strategy with pins on maps might wish. No act of mine or of the Government or of any other responsible spokesman had led anyone to believe this." He denied that the Giulia Alpine Division had suffered the enormous losses which had been alleged, or that it had fled. General Soddu had just visited it and had sent him a telegram, dated November 12, in which he testified to the "magnificent impression" made upon him by "this superb unit."

"We will break the loins of Greece," roared the Duce, "in two or twelve months matters little. The war has





R.A.F. VERSUS REGIA AERONAUTICA

Royal Air Force ground crew in Greece awaiting the return of one of our bombers. Some idea of the difficult terrain round Epirus can be gained from the top photograph showing an Italian 'plane above the mountains. On the right, R.A.F. transport is being unloaded from a ship at a Greek port, following a large number of bombs stacked on the quayside. Beneath, an R.A.F. bomber about to touch down after an attack on the Italian forces in Albania in late November, 1940. The ground is covered with snow.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Wide World

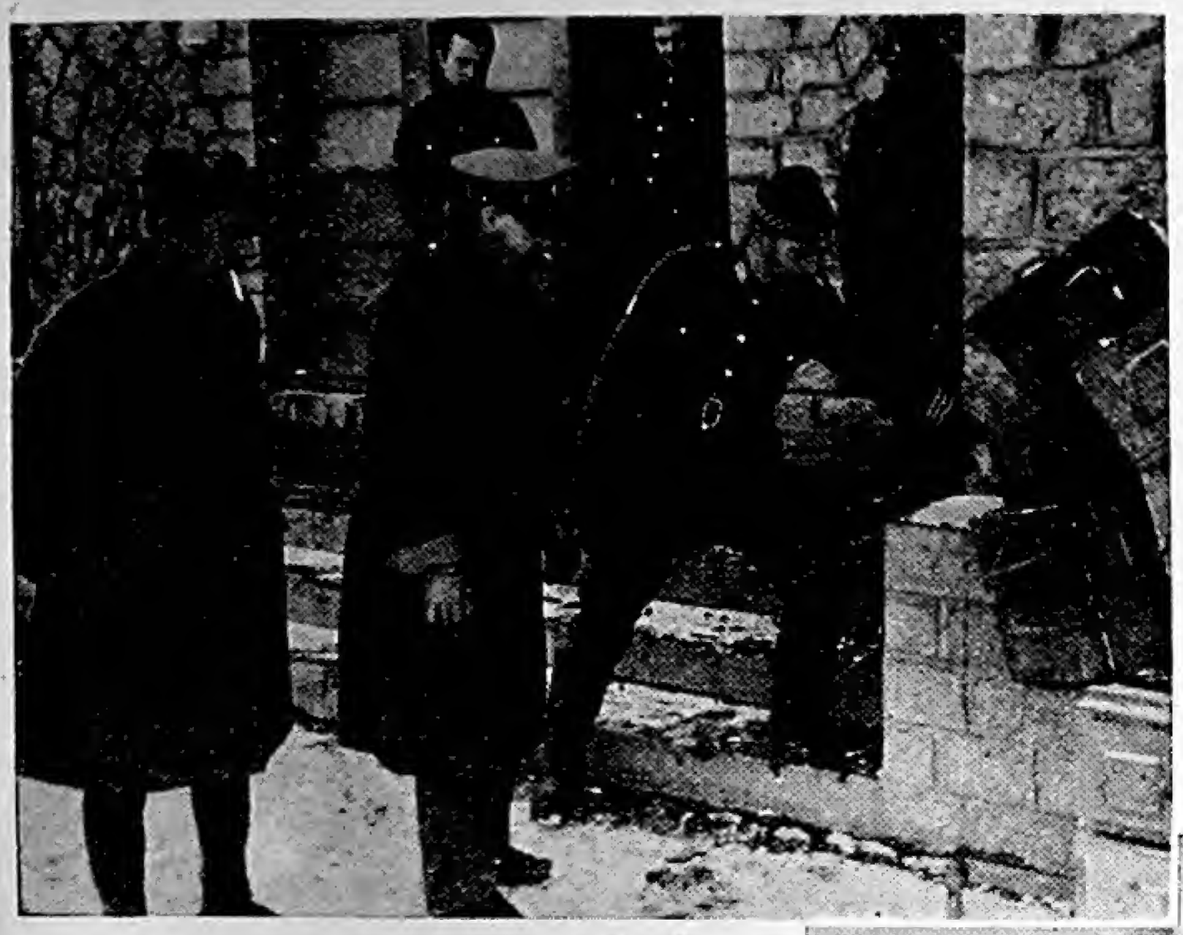




GREEK ARMY IN ALBANIA

The headquarters of a Greek unit established in an Albanian farmhouse. Top right, mules were used for transporting food and water over the ice-bound passes. Fighting in Albania was extremely difficult, and sometimes Greek soldiers were cut off from food supplies until brought to them from neighbouring villages. Nevertheless, in the last two months of 1940, as in 1941 until the German intervention, the Greeks were generally triumphant. Centre, Greek artillery in action; beneath are Greek 'buses marked 'Athens to Rome.'

Photos, Bosshard; Black Star



only just begun. We have sufficient guns and men and means to wipe out all Greek resistance. English help will not be able to stop us from carrying out this firm decision, nor will it save the clique from a catastrophe they will have brought upon themselves and such as they have shown they deserve. The 372 fallen, 1,081 wounded, and 650 missing which have been recorded during the first ten days of fighting in the Epirus will be avenged."

Only a few days after Mussolini's furious braggadocio Koritza fell. The first Greek detachments entered the town before daybreak on November 22,

Greeks Take Koritza

and they were followed at nine o'clock by the main body. As the victors entered with bands playing and flags flying they were received with tears of joy by the population, while from many a window fluttered an Albanian flag, hidden away for years in anticipation of just this day of deliverance. When General Metaxas announced the news of Koritza's capture in Athens, there were demonstrations of intense patriotic enthusiasm. Before the King's palace the great square was a sea of waving flags, in which the blue and white of Greece was mixed with the red, white and blue of the Union Jack. Through the crowded streets military bands marched up and down, and the British soldiers and airmen in the capital were carried shoulder high.

In Rome the news was received with gloom. "After 11 days of fighting," said the Italian communiqué, "two divisions, deployed on the defensive along the Greco-Albanian frontier and before Koritza, have been withdrawn west of the city. Through this period fierce fighting has taken place. Our losses are considerable. Equally serious, perhaps more so, are the enemy's. Italian reinforcements are concentrating on the new line."

The communiqué gave too favourable a picture of the Italian situation. The invaders, indeed, had been completely outfought in hand-to-hand fighting, and had been driven out of their shallow trenches by the Greek Army with bayonets and trench knives. As they withdrew along the roads to the north their retreat became a rout and they left behind them hundreds of lorries, numbers of heavy guns, many anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns, vast stores of food, and many big dumps of petrol. As they abandoned the Greek villages in Epirus they had occupied for so short a time, they committed many barbarities. "The Italians are looting and plundering the villages they are leaving," said a communiqué issued in Athens on



GREEK AND ALBANIAN STANDARDS ON KORITZA'S TOWN HALL

Koritza was taken by the Greeks on November 22, following an Italian retreat which began in mid-November and ended as a rout. Their entry was signalized by Albanian patriotic demonstrations. Many Albanian flags were taken out of hiding and hung from the windows. The photograph at the top of the page shows British soldiers attached to the Greek army inspecting captured Italian ammunition left at the door of the aerodrome office in Koritza.

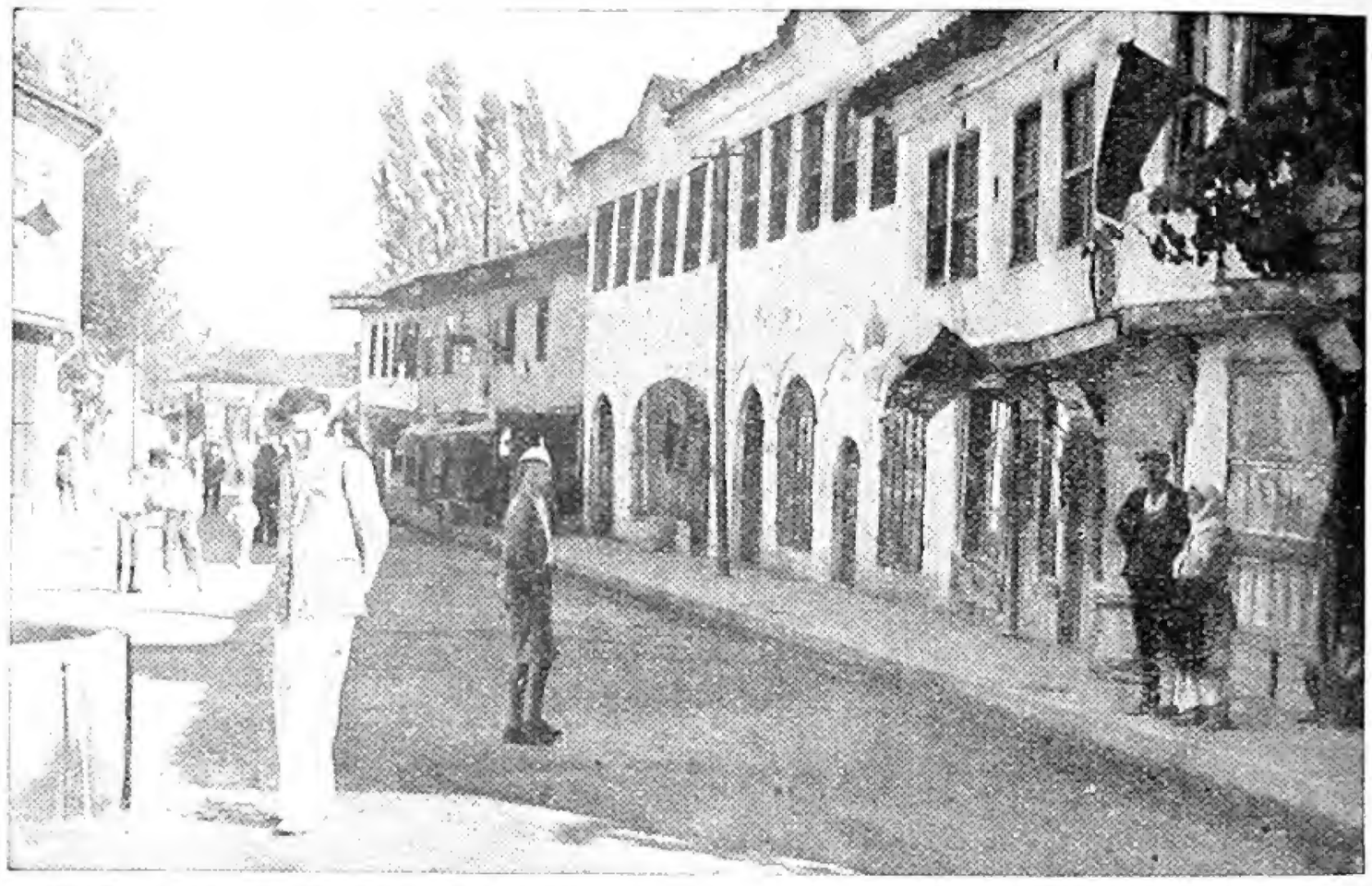
Photos, Bosshard

November 23. " The village of Sayiades and other freed villages present horrible scenes where the Italians are leaving traces of savagery and barbarity. In the village of Bassibikon women and girls have been raped and killed, while many women and children have been carried off as hostages. Their fate is still unknown."

Along the whole front of a hundred miles the Greeks steadily advanced, pushing the Italians before them. Everywhere in Albania they were received as liberators by the native population. By December 4, eleven days after the fall of Koritza, Greek patrols were entering Argyrokastro, the Italian base in Southern Albania. In the Koritza sector Greek advanced units were reported to be within sight of Pogradets, 25 miles to the north on the shore of Lake Okrida. Foot by foot the Greeks fought their way up the heights above the town. When these were carried, Pogradets' fall was inevitable. On the afternoon of November 30 Greek patrols entered the place, hard on the heels of the retreating enemy. Once again the spoil was considerable, comprising quantities of ammunition and a number of tanks and lorries, abandoned by the Italians as they hastened along the road to Elbasan.

Albanians Welcome the Greeks

Meanwhile, the British R.A.F. maintained a continuous offensive against the Italians in Albania and also against their base ports on the Italian mainland. This British aid was generously acknowledged, as when, after the fall of Koritza, General Metaxas, after declaring the nation's " profound gratitude to the valiant Greek Army, heroic Air Force, and indomitable Navy, for the glorious pages which they have added to our history of 3,000 years," went on to express " the grateful acknowledgement of the Hellenic nation to our valiant British allies for the wholehearted aid they have rendered to our struggle, and for all the exploits scored by their unconquerable Navy and brilliant Air Force."



POGRADETS FALLS TO THE GREEKS

The town of Pogradets on the shore of Lake Okrida was captured by the Greeks on November 30, 1940. The Greeks entered close behind the retreating Italians and took possession of an accumulation of abandoned tanks, lorries and ammunition.

Photo, G. Bull



GREEKS TEND THE WOUNDED

Serving on the field with the Greek soldiers, the nurses did noble work for the cause. Here is one wearing a steel helmet attending to a wound received by a soldier on the Albanian front.

Photo, Associated Press



AIR-RAID ALARM AT ARGYROKASTRO

Greek soldiers at the improvised air-raid alarm on the heights overlooking the town of Argyrokastro. Eleven days after the fall of Koritza (November 23) Argyrokastro (pron. Ahgi-rok-ăs-trð), the Italian base in southern Albania, was in Greek hands. Along the whole front from Konispolis in the south to Pogradets in the north the Greek campaign, after heavy and heroic fighting against odds, was one success after another, the Italians retreating precipitately to Elbasan.

Photo, Black Star

Britain, too, was proud of her ally. " We are all inspired by this feat of Greek valour against an enemy so superior in numbers and equipment," telegraphed Mr. Churchill to General Metaxas. " This recalls the classic age. Ζήτω ἡ Ἑλλάς (Long Live Greece!)"

ITALY STRIKES AT GREEK INDEPENDENCE

Slavish imitator of his Nazi partner, Mussolini adopted Hitler's well-known technique of aggression before launching his attack on Greece, proceeding from threats and groundless accusations to the presenting of an ultimatum almost at the moment of invasion. The text of most of this lying document is included among those below.

TEXT OF ITALIAN ULTIMATUM TO GREECE, OCTOBER 28, 1940:

THE Italian Government has repeatedly had to take note of the fact that during the present conflict the Greek Government has assumed and maintained an attitude of contradiction not only to what can be called normal good neighbourly relations between the two countries but also to the barest duties of neutrality.

Over and over again the Italian Government has found it necessary to recall to the Greek Government the observance of these duties and to protest at their systematic violation, which became particularly gross when the Greek Government started to tolerate the use of their territorial waters, coasts and ports by the British Navy for the prosecution of the war against Italy.

Formerly the Greek Government assisted in supplying the British Air Force and permitted the organization of the British Secret Service in the Greek islands against Italy.

The Italian Government has been perfectly aware of these facts, which have been the object of repeated diplomatic steps to the Greek Government. The Greek Government, however, has not answered with any measures designed to protect its neutrality, but has intensified its help to the British armed forces. The Italian Government has proof that this collaboration by the Greek Government with Italy's adversaries has been planned and set forth in agreements of a military, naval and aerial character. . . . .

All these provocations can no longer be tolerated by the Italian Government. Greek neutrality has become more and more a pretence. The responsibility for this falls primarily on Great Britain, but it is also clear that the Greek Government intended to transform or at least to acquiesce in the transformation of Greek territory into a base for military action against Italy. This could only end in an armed conflict with Greece, a conflict which Italy has every intention of avoiding.

The Italian Government has, therefore, requested the Greek Government, as a guarantee of Greek neutrality and of Italian security, to allow Italian forces to occupy for the duration of the present conflict with Great Britain certain strategic points on Greek territory. The Italian Government ask the Greek Government to place no obstacle in the way of the troops designed to carry out this occupation. . . . If any resistance is encountered it will be put down by force of arms; and responsibility for this will fall on the Greek Government.

PROCLAMATION BY GENERAL METAXAS, PREMIER OF GREECE, OCTOBER 28:

THE moment has come to fight for the independence, integrity and honour of Greece. Although we have observed the strictest neutrality towards all, Italy, not recognizing our right to live as free Greeks, demanded of me at 3 o'clock this morning the surrender of parts of our national territory, and stated that in order to occupy them their troops would march at 6 a.m. I replied that I considered this demand and the manner in which it was made as a declaration of war against Greece.

We are now about to prove that we are worthy of our ancestors and of the liberty our forefathers secured for us. The whole nation will rise as one man. Fight for your country, for your wives and children, and for our sacred traditions.

MR. CHURCHILL, IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, NOVEMBER 5:

THE Italian Dictator, perhaps embarrassed by the somewhat florid flirtations of M. Laval with the German conqueror, or perhaps playing his part in some new predatory design, has, in his customary cold-blooded way, fallen upon the small but famous and immortal Greek nation. Without the slightest provocation, with no pretence at parley, Signor Mussolini has invaded Greece—or tried to do so—and his aircraft have murdered an increasing number of Greek civilians, women and children in Salonika and many other open Greek towns. The Greek King, his Government, and the Greek people have resolved to fight for life and honour, lest the world should be too easily led in chains.

France and Great Britain guaranteed to come to the aid of Greece if she were the victim of unprovoked aggression. It was a joint guarantee, but unhappily the Vichy Government is at this moment engaged in sincere and loyal collaboration with Herr Hitler in his schemes for establishing a so-called new order in Europe. We are therefore left alone. We have most carefully abstained from any action likely to draw upon the Greeks the enmity of the criminal dictators. For their part the Greeks have maintained so strict a neutrality that we were unacquainted with their dispositions or their intentions . . . .

I hope I shall not be asked by the House to give any definite account of such measures as we are able to take. If I were to set them high I might raise false hopes; if I were to set them low I might cause undue despondency and alarm; and if I stated exactly what they were, that would be exactly what the enemy would like to know. We will do our best. That is all I can say.

MUSSOLINI, IN A SPEECH TO THE FASCIST PARTY, NOV. 18:

AFTER a long period of patience we have finally torn the mask from a country guaranteed by Great Britain, from the subtle enemy, Greece. It was a bill which was waiting its day of reckoning. One thing must be said, and it may perhaps surprise certain Italians who are not mentally living in our times. It is this: that the Greeks hate Italy as they hate no other people. It is a hatred which appears at first inexplicable, but it is a genuine, deep and incurable hate common to all classes in cities and villages, in the higher and the lower classes everywhere in Greece.

On this hatred, which may be called grotesque, the policy of Greece has been based throughout recent years. It consisted of complete political complicity with Great Britain. Nor could it have been otherwise, seeing that the King is English, the political caste is English, the Stock Exchange and the purse of the nation are English.

This complicity, which is shown in many ways and which will in due time be irrefutably proved by documents, was in other words an open act of hostility against Italy. . . . . We had to put an end to this situation. Since October 28, when our troops stepped across the Greco-Albanian frontier, this has been done. . . . .

GENERAL METAXAS, IN A BROADCAST TO THE GREEK PEOPLE AND ARMY, NOVEMBER 22:

ITALY attacked Greece with the sole object of depriving her of all that is most precious and most worth-while—life, freedom, national independence and honour. Greece rose united as one man, and at the King's call flew to arms.

I am surely interpreting the desire of the whole nation in expressing gratitude to Great Britain for her whole-hearted support and above all for the achievement of her unparalleled Navy and Air Force. The Italian Dictator, when he made his last speech so full of venom and rage against Greece, little thought that the Greek Army would so quickly and so unforgettably reply . . . . Mussolini, surprised that his desire to enslave Greece should have provoked the Greeks to hatred, showed that the war aim of Fascist Italy is the extermination of Greece. We assure him that we will not be exterminated, but will live as a free and independent nation; and, with our British Allies, we shall conquer. We are struggling not only for existence but for the cause of the other Balkan peoples and for the liberation of Albania; we are struggling for ideals whose import goes beyond our frontiers and extends to all mankind.

Diary of the War

NOVEMBER, 1940

November 1, 1940. Big Italian attack launched from Koritza towards Florina. Violent artillery duel on Epirus front. Athens raided for first time. R.A.F. bomb Berlin, Magdeburg, Essen, Osnabruck and 15 aerodromes. Enemy lose 18 aircraft over Britain; we lose seven.

November 2. Italians marching on Janina after crossing River Kalamas. Greeks occupying new heights in Albanian territory. Enemy bombers raid Salonika, killing 200 civilians, and Corfu, Patras and Janina. Nazis lose 10 aircraft over Britain. Submarine "Taku" sinks large enemy tanker.

November 3. British troops now in Greek territory, supported by Navy and R.A.F. Greek troops reported to have encircled Koritza, after taking 1,200 prisoners. R.A.F. attack Kiel and targets at Naples. One night raider destroyed.

November 4. Two Italian submarines reported sunk. Armed merchant cruisers "Laurentic" and "Patroclus" reported sunk by U-boat. R.A.F. bomb ports on E. coast of Italy, including Bari and Brindisi. Greeks reported to have cut off 30,000 Italians near Janina. Night raids over London and elsewhere.

November 5. Convoy of 38 British ships, including liner "Rangitiki," attacked by surface raider in Atlantic; escort cruiser "Jervis Bay" sunk after fighting heroic action. R.A.F. bomb Emden, Bremerhaven, Bremen, Hamburg, many aerodromes and Channel ports. Greeks occupy new heights in Albania. Day and night raids over Britain. Enemy lose seven aircraft, Britain five.

November 6. Greeks advance in Koritza area but withdraw in Epirus. Heavy raids on Southampton by day and on London by night. Nazis lose six aircraft, Britain four. British retake Gallabat on Sudan-Abyssinian frontier. R.A.F. bomb many industrial targets in Germany.

November 7. R.A.F. heavily bomb industrial targets in the Ruhr, shipping at Dunkirk, Lorient and many aerodromes. Large formations of day raiders driven off. Intensive night raids on London, Home Counties and elsewhere. Nazis lose eight aircraft, Britain five.

November 8. British steamer "Empire Dorado" sunk by sea raider. R.A.F. bomb targets in Germany, including Munich, and war factories at Turin and Milan. Intense attack on Lorient. Enemy dive-bombers attack shipping off E. and S.E. coasts. Seventeen destroyed. One ship sunk, another damaged.

November 9. Two supply ships reported sunk by submarine "Sturgeon." Venezia Division of Alpini cut off in Pindus area. Widespread night raids on Britain. Enemy lose seven aircraft. R.A.F. attack Lorient, Boulogne and Calais. Death of Mr. Chamberlain.

November 10. Italians attack across R. Kalamas but are repelled. Libreville, Gabon, surrenders to Free French. Announced that aircraft of "Ark Royal" attacked Cagliari, Sardinia. Other naval forces sink three ships in convoy and damage two others. R.A.F. attack Boulogne, Calais and many other targets. Day and night raids on Britain. Submarine H 49 considered lost.

November 11. Battle of Taranto, in which Italy loses three battleships, two cruisers and two Fleet auxiliaries. Italian aircraft attempt to attack shipping in Thames estuary; 13 destroyed. Thirteen German 'planes also shot down.

November 12. R.A.F. bomb places in Ruhr, docks at Flushing and Dunkirk, Lorient and many aerodromes. Durazzo raided. Strong night attacks on London, Merseyside and Midlands.

November 13. R.A.F. bomb Berlin, Cologne and many other places in Germany. Greeks capture new line of heights in Albania. Six raiders shot down over Britain. Sir R. Brooke-Popham appointed C.-in-C. Far East.

November 14. Coventry devastated by night bombers. London and other districts also raided. Enemy lose 19 aircraft. General Greek advance. Heavy air attack on Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen and 26 aerodromes.

November 15. London suffers heaviest night attack of war. Enemy lose 20 aircraft. Five H.M. minesweepers reported lost. R.A.F. bomb Hamburg, Kiel, and coast targets from Norway to W. France.

November 16. Italians retreating in Pindus sector and on Epirus front. Daylight raids on Cologne and Bremen. Night attacks on Hamburg and Antwerp. Hebrides attacked for first time. Heavy night raid on South Coast town. Five raiders destroyed. Air Marshal A. S. Barratt appointed to newly created R.A.F. Army Cooperation Command.

November 17. Admiralty announce naval bombardment of Mogadishu, It. Somaliland. R.A.F. make large-scale day attack on German invasion ports. Night raids on the Ruhr, Lorient and aerodromes. Other forces attack Brindisi, Elbasan, Benghazi, Tobruk and Massawa. Enemy lose 14 aircraft in day and night raids on Britain. Five British fighters lost.

November 18. Violent fighting around Koritza. Italians driven back across R. Kalamas. West Country town suffers many day raids. Widespread night attacks. R.A.F. attack synthetic oil works at Leuna. Two enemy seaplanes and flying-boat destroyed.

November 19. Light naval forces sink German E Boat. Submarine "Rainbow" reported lost. R.A.F. bomb Skoda works at Pilsen, Berlin, ports and industrial centres in N.W. Germany, Lorient and Barfleur. Birmingham has nine-hour night raid.

November 20. New Greek offensive on wide front. Hungary joins tripartite pact. R.A.F. make large-scale attack on Duisburg-Ruhrort. Other forces bomb Lorient and Channel ports. Airfields in Libya and East Africa heavily attacked. Night raiders over many parts of Britain.

November 21. Italians abandon Koritza and retreat to Elbasan and Pogradets. General Greek advance in Epirus. Air Marshal O. T. Boyd interned in Sicily after forced landing. Day and night raids over Britain.

November 22. Italian retreat continues. Greeks capture much war material. R.A.F. make intensive attack on Merignac aerodrome, near Bordeaux. Many raids over Germany. Intense 11-hour night attack on West Midland town.

November 23. Greek advance continues along whole front. Three day raids over S.E. England. At night Southampton has its heaviest raid. Spitfire squadron routs 20 Italian fighters over Straits of Dover, shooting down seven without loss. Four German raiders also destroyed. R.A.F. attack Berlin, Leipzig, targets in the Ruhr, and many aerodromes. Other forces bomb Turin. Rumania and Slovakia join Axis.

November 24. Greeks capture Moscopole and Konispol. Bristol heavily attacked at night. R.A.F. make extensive raids on invasion ports, Hamburg, Wilhelmshaven, Den Helder, aerodromes, seaplane bases and other targets. Heavy attack on Durazzo. Another on Assab.

November 25. Greek advance continues along entire front. R.A.F. raid Kiel, Wilhelmshaven, Hamburg and Willemsoord. Assab again bombed. Four raiders destroyed over Britain.

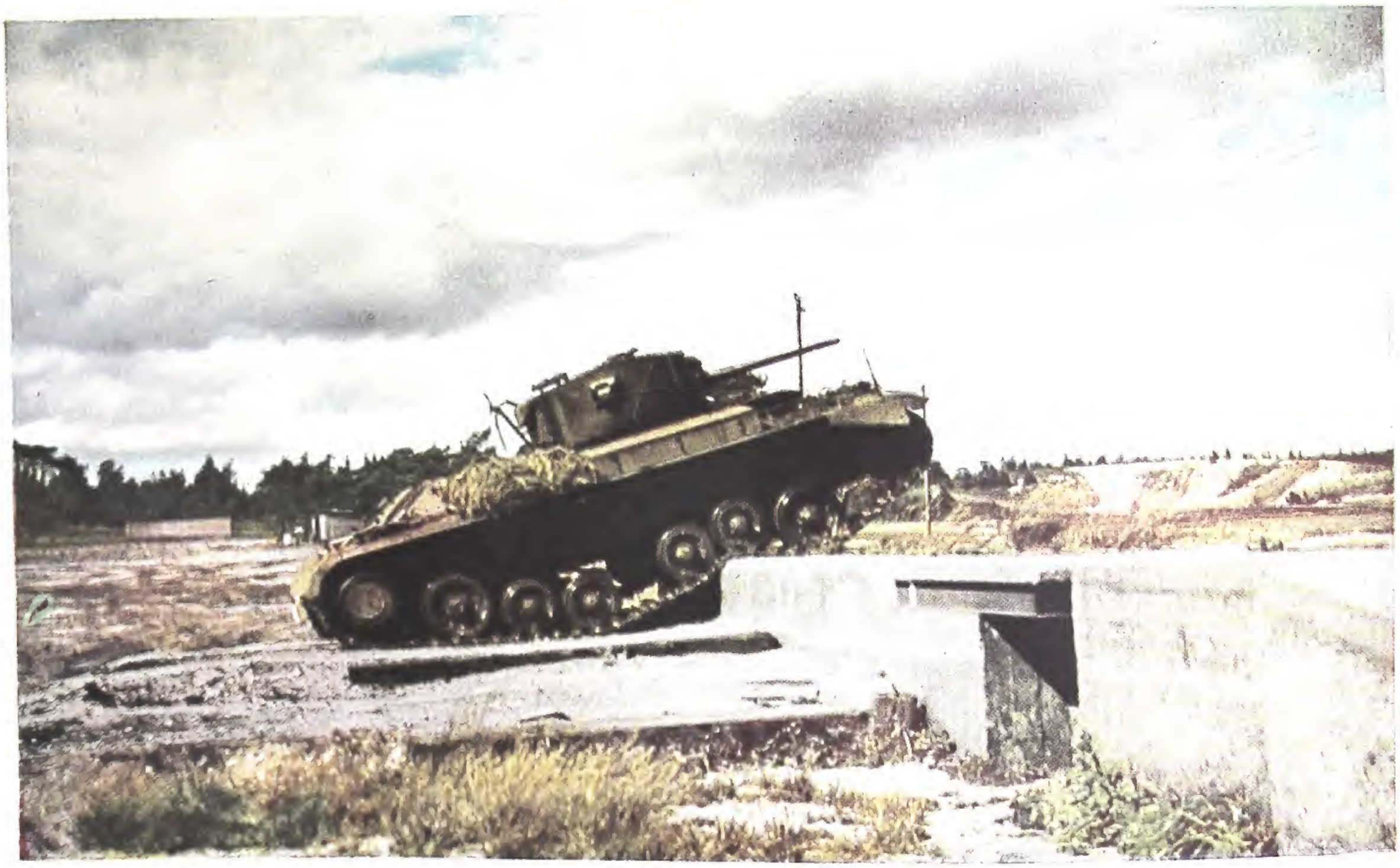
November 26. R.A.F. make large-scale attack on Cologne. Other forces bomb Berlin, Rotterdam, Flushing, Antwerp, Calais, Boulogne and Turin. Valona harbour, Albania, heavily raided. Bristol attacked by day and night. Four raiders destroyed.

November 27. Naval Battle of Cagliari, off Sardinia, in which enemy battleship, cruiser and two destroyers are damaged. Heavy night raid on Plymouth. Enemy lose 11 aircraft, Britain two. R.A.F. make intense night attack on Cologne. Other forces bomb Channel ports.

November 28. Greeks occupy heights overlooking Argyrokastro. R.A.F. very active in Albania. Day and night raids on Britain; Merseyside has its heaviest attack. Six raiders shot down; we lose seven fighters. R.A.F. bomb Düsseldorf, Mannheim, Politz, Stettin, Cuxhaven and Channel ports.

November 29. Naval engagement in Channel; damaged enemy ships pursued to Brest. H.M.S. "Javelin" hit by aerial torpedo but reaches port. Greek advance continues despite Italian reinforcements. Day and night raids on London and Home Counties. Enemy loses five aircraft, Britain two. R.A.F. bomb Bremen, Cologne, Hamburg, Boulogne and Le Havre.

November 30. Greeks capture Pogradets and close in on Argyrokastro. Heavy fighting along whole front. Intense night raid on Southampton, causing great destruction. Enemy lose five aircraft, Britain two.





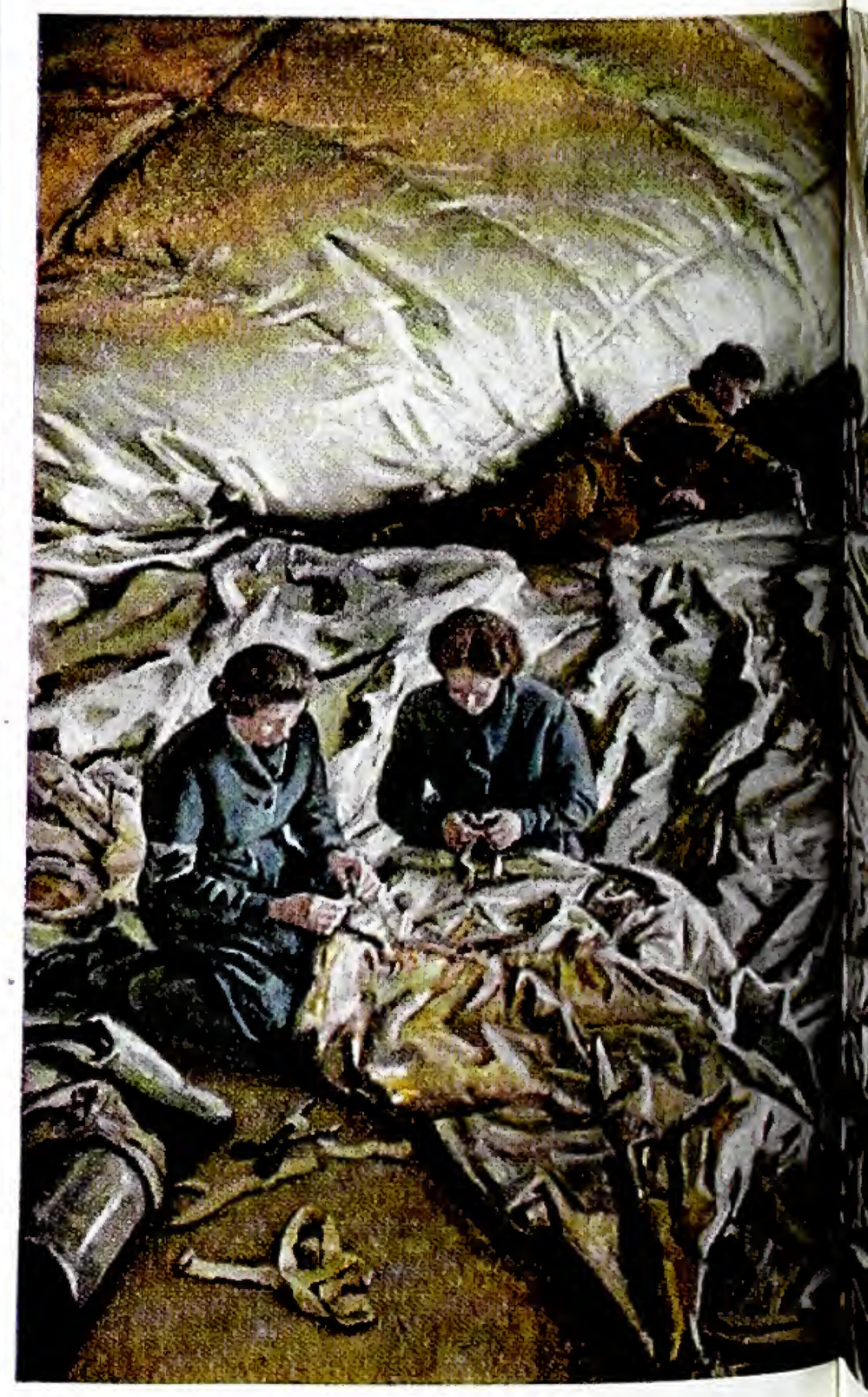
BRITISH TANKS UNDERGO FINAL TESTS BEFORE SHIPMENT TO MIDDLE EAST

The Valentine tank seen at top taking a bridge in its stride is a 16-ton front-line fighting vehicle—easily manoeuvred, and armed with a 2-pounder. In lower photograph the gun is being cleaned. In the turret is also a Besa machine-gun (see illus., p. 1275).

From Kodachrome direct colour photographs by Fox Photos







WORK OF BALLOON COMMAND—ASHORE AND AFLOAT

The effective paintings reproduced in the centre illustrate (top) the London barrage seen from Tower Bridge ; and below, balloon fabric workers of the W.A.A.F. engaged in repair work inside one of the big balloon sheds. The first picture, by Leading Aircraftman Weston, was exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery, London, in May, 1942 ; the other was painted for the Nation's War Records by Dame Laura Knight, R.A., and exhibited at the Royal Academy, London, 1942 (Crown Copyright reserved). Large numbers of women of the W.A.A.F. were employed not only in the servicing and repair of balloons but also in operational control and management of these monsters—a task calling for first-class team work by alert and skilful







BARRAGE THAT FRUSTRATED THE DIVE-BOMBERS

men and women. The colour photograph at right is of an airwoman at the control of a winch lorry used for raising and lowering balloons ; a steel grille protects her from injury. The value of the balloon barrage, in forcing hostile bombers to keep above a certain height, depending on visibility conditions, and in frustrating particularly the dive-bomber, was so great that it was extended to the protection of ships afloat. The left-hand photograph shows an operational barge in which the balloons used for ships are housed and serviced; these balloons are smaller and have not the air-filled stabilizing fins of the ordinary barrage balloon. Alongside is a fast R.A.F. motor-boat engaged in transferring a balloon to a destroyer

From Kodachrome direct colour photographs by Fox Photos



HONOUR THE BRAVE WHO CAME NOT SAFE TO PORT

These ships' badges belong to twenty-five vessels of the Royal Navy—ranging from battleships to submarines—lost by enemy action before the close of 1941. They are here placed on permanent record in honour of those of the ships' crews who gave their lives in their country's service.

From material supplied by H.M. Dockyard, Chatham. By permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office

Chapter 125

THE SEA AFFAIR DURING THE EVENTFUL MONTH OF NOVEMBER, 1940

Enemy Surface Raiders in Three Oceans—How the 'Jervis Bay' Saved Her Convoy — The 'Rangitiki' — Remarkable Story of the Tanker 'San Demetrio'—Fleet Air Arm Raids Taranto: Heavy Toll of Enemy Warships—Raid on Cagliari—Brush With the Italian Fleet Off Sardinia—Splendid Work of Our Torpedo 'Planes

THE month of November, 1940, was a most eventful one on the naval side. In the Northern areas comparatively little was released concerning the Navy's continuous efforts against German commerce destroyers of all kinds—surface, submarine, and air—but these operations were carried on without any abatement and were meeting with a very fair measure of success, in spite of the advantage being greatly with the enemy, who made full use of the long nights to get raiders of all kinds on to the trade lanes. Then, too, the long stretch of enemy-occupied coast made a close watch impossible.

The Germans had paid great attention to their dive-bombing operations against both warships and merchantmen, but against the former the results were very disappointing indeed, and even against merchantmen were not up to expectations, while the anti-aircraft work of the smaller British naval types —destroyers, escort vessels, trawlers, and the like—was achieving increased success and making dive-bombing operations more hazardous.

German surface raiders, disguised merchantmen, were operating in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. One of them succeeded in laying a mine-field off the Australian coast which was not suspected until it had claimed its first victims, which included an American steamer. A number of British and Allied merchant ships were destroyed and their passengers and crews transferred to tenders, where the conditions soon became very bad. Owing to the shortage of cruisers and the demands of the Mediterranean Station, much of the patrol and convoying work in the Atlantic had to be entrusted to armed liners. One of these was H.M.S. "Jervis Bay," a twin-screw passenger steamer of 14,164 tons gross with a speed of 15 knots—built in 1922 for the Australian Government to run on an emigrant service from England. She was, according to the idea of most naval men, a better auxiliary cruiser than most, for she was a good seaboat and eminently habitable; although her speed might have been a little higher with advantage, her big oil capacity permitted her to keep the seas for almost unlimited periods. At the outbreak of war she was owned by the Aberdeen & Commonwealth Line, still on the Australian service, and under pre-arranged plans was commissioned as an auxiliary cruiser armed with eight rather old-pattern 6-inch guns backed by anti-aircraft pieces. She was commanded by Acting Captain E. S. Fogarty Fegen, R.N., but the greater part of her crew came from the Merchant Navy. Nearly all the officers were Royal Naval Reserve, either permanent or temporary, or R.N.V.R., and, with the exception of a few key and specialist ratings and a number from Canada, the lower deck was filled from the Royal Naval Reserve or from merchant seamen serving under what are known as "T.124 articles," which enable them to man commissioned ships without joining the R.N.R.

Atlantic Patrol



'JERVIS BAY' V.C.

Captain E. S. Fogarty Fegen, R.N., who was a cruiser lieutenant in the war of 1914-18, commanded the 'Jervis Bay' in the fight against the pocket battleship 'Admiral Scheer.' He saved his convoy by his gallantry, one of the finest actions ever fought by an armed merchantman. His posthumous V.C. was presented to his sister.

Photo, J. Hall

Captain Fogarty Fegen, son of the late Vice-Admiral Fegen, was a Tipperary man who entered the Navy as a cadet in 1904, when he represented the fifth generation of the family to be naval officers. During the war of 1914–18 he was a watch-keeping lieutenant in the cruiser "Amphion" and the flotilla leader "Faulknor," first lieutenant of the destroyer "Mansfield" and in command of H.M. Torpedo-Boat No. 26 and the destroyers "Moy" and "Paladin." After the war he continued in destroyer and cruiser work for a time, but showed more and more enthusiasm for the training service, in which he was conspicuously successful in getting the very best out of the boys under him. When war broke out he was wearing two medals for gallantry in saving life.

Epic of the 'Jervis Bay'

On November 5 the "Jervis Bay" was in mid-Atlantic protecting a convoy of thirty-seven homeward-bound merchantmen (one having straggled away from the main body) which had been collected at Halifax. Most of them came from the various American ports and were loaded with munitions and supplies, but some had come through the Panama Canal from the Pacific, and their cargoes were principally foodstuffs. Rear-Admiral H. B. Maltby, who had emerged from his retirement at the outbreak of war, was commodore of the convoy in the steamer "Cornish City." This was an unpretentious cargo carrier which had the requisite accommodation, although the New Zealand Shipping Company's motorship "Rangitiki" (16,698 tons) was by far the most impressive-looking vessel in the whole collection, including even the "Jervis Bay."

At about 6 p.m. Greenwich mean time a warship which turned out to be the "Admiral Scheer," of the famous "pocket battleship" type, sister to the "Admiral Graf Spee" scuttled off the River Plate, was sighted about eight to ten miles on the port beam. She at once opened fire with 11-inch salvoes, concentrating on the "Rangitiki,"

whose impressive appearance caused her to be mistaken for the leader or escort. A few splinters went through the "Rangitiki's" funnels from shells bursting in the water, but she sustained no damage. The Commodore immediately gave the pre-arranged "avoiding orders"; all the ships turned away from the enemy and scattered as much as possible, laying a smoke screen with funnels and floats, and most of them opened fire with their defensive guns aft, although they had not the least hope of scoring hits at that range.

It later became known that the "Admiral Scheer" was under the command of Rear-Admiral Lutjens, who had been head of the Torpedo Inspection and Trials Committee when war broke out and who was later to go down, regarded as a national hero in Germany, with the battleship "Bismarck." Dispassionately considered as a tactician, he certainly did not shine in the present action, for when the "Jervis Bay" was gallantly turned towards his powerful ship (which ought to have sent her to the bottom with one or two salvoes) he concentrated his attention on her long enough for the merchant ships, which were his real quarry, to escape.

Ill-Fated Enemy Admiral

The armed liner had not the least chance of sinking her adversary, whose 4-inch armour belt and 5½-inch turret faces would have resisted the liner's old-type 6-inch guns at point-blank range. Moreover, their range was very short, inevitable in an armed merchantman, because they were mounted in such a way that they could not be given any great elevation. The six 11-inch guns of the "Admiral Scheer" were credited with an extreme range of 30,000 yards, and her eight 5·9s would carry very much farther than the British 6-inchers. Eleven knots faster than the "Jervis Bay," the enemy could choose the range. There could be only one result to the action, but the whole crew of the "Jervis Bay" were intent on giving the merchantmen a chance to escape.

Without the least permanent protection, not even the coal bunkers which were valued by auxiliaries in the late war, the gallant liner was soon being hit. The power steering gear from the bridge was quickly disabled; direct hits put the two forward 6-inch guns out of action, and for a time she could not bring her broadside guns to bear as her head would not pay off. A shell started a fire. Still Captain Fegen kept her in pursuit of the enemy with all the steam that he could raise, knowing that every minute was giving the convoy a better chance to escape. His right arm was shattered early in the action, and when the steering gear was disabled he went from the forward to the after bridge in the hope of being able to control the ship better from there. Finding that the position was worse, he went forward again, and remained there until the end of the action. The White Ensign was shot away, and a seaman nailed another to the wooden main top-





MOST GALLANT ACTION

Left, the 'Jervis Bay,' a passenger steamer of 14,164 tons armed as an auxiliary cruiser, which saved 33 out of 37 ships of the convoy she was protecting by pursuing herimmensely superior enemy. The Swedish Captain Sven Olander and his Chief Officer (above) of the S.S. 'Stureholm' saved 65 survivors, who are seen below.

Photos, Wide World; Canadian Official



mast in traditional fashion. The crew served their guns steadily until they were awash. All boats but one had already been destroyed by shellfire. As the liner went down by the stern, life-saving rafts floated off her deck but were fired on by the German ship.

Captain Fegen had gone down with his ship (a posthumous V.C. was awarded on November 18) after doing everything possible, and the outlook of the survivors, on a bitterly cold night in mid-Atlantic, was a terrible one. It is doubtful whether any would have reached shore had it not been for the gallantry of Captain Olander, of the Swedish steamer "Stureholm," which was one of the convoy and had made her escape according to orders. Filled

with admiration for the gallantry of the crew of the "Jervis Bay," Captain Olander after nightfall obtained the consent of his whole crew to go back and search for survivors. The only lifeboat floating was filled with dead men, but from rafts and wreckage he saved



STORY OF THE 'SAN DEMETRIO'

In the magnificent but hopeless battle of the 'Jervis Bay' against the German raider a tanker of the convoy, the 'San Demetrio,' had to be abandoned, but was found by 16 of her crew next day still burning. How they saved her and 11,000 tons of her cargo is told in this page. Above, Lt. A. G. Hawkins, who took command; right, Chief Engineer Pollard, who got the fire under control, with part of the gallant crew; below, the battered ship on her arrival in Britain.

Photos, J. Hall; Planet News

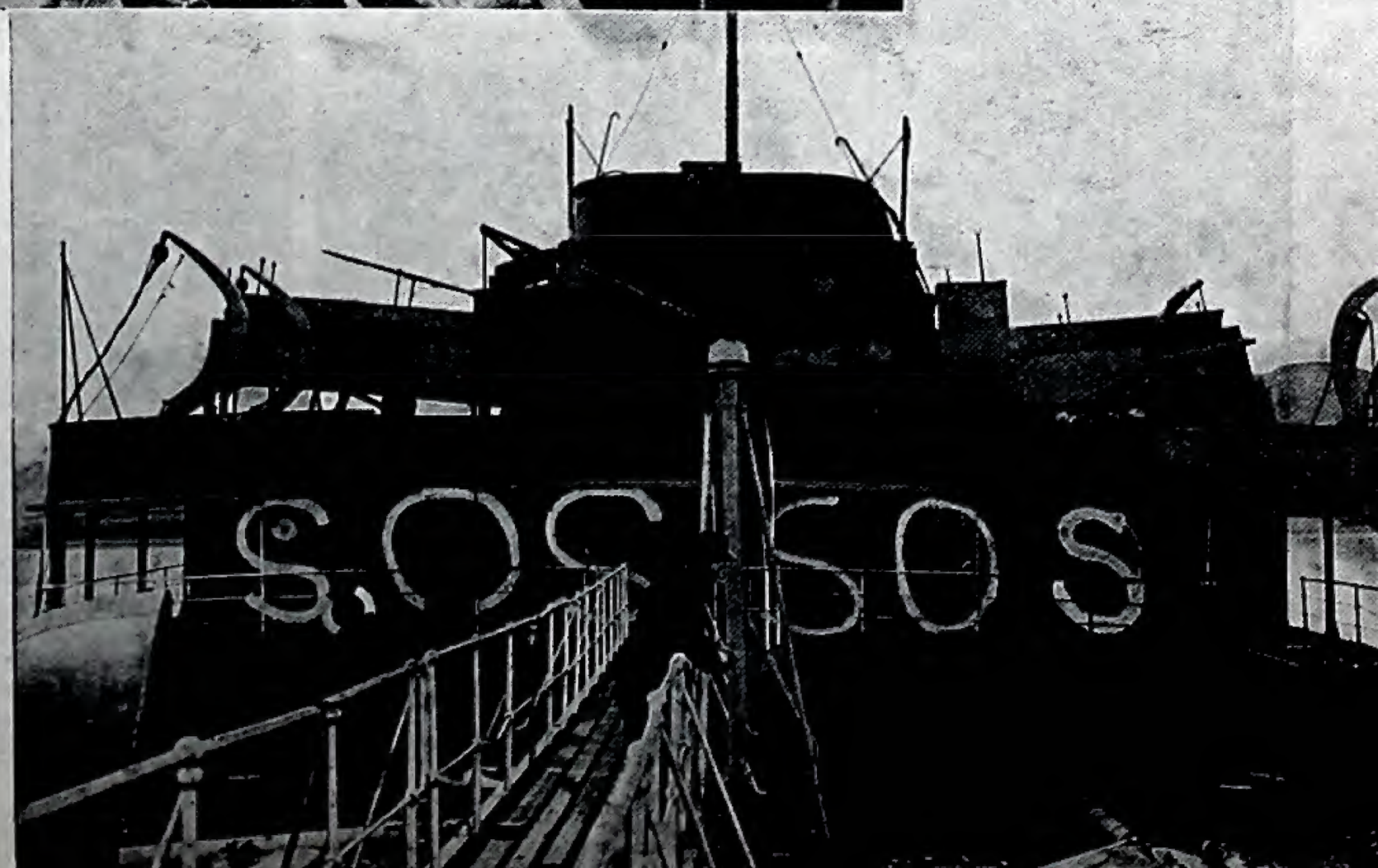


sixty-five and took them back into a Canadian port; 190 officers and men perished in one of the finest actions ever credited to an armed merchantman.

The gallantry of the "Jervis Bay" permitted thirty-three out of the thirty-seven ships in the convoy to reach port safely, although the thirty-eighth, the straggler mentioned earlier, was attacked by enemy aircraft three days later, set on fire, and had to be abandoned. Germany claimed that the whole convoy, amounting to 86,000 tons, had been sunk. Matching the gallantry of all in the "Jervis Bay" was that of 26-year-old Second Officer Arthur Hawkins of the Eagle Oil Co's tanker, "San Demetrio," one of the ships of the convoy which the enemy contrived to set on fire by shell. Filled with petrol, her case seemed hopeless, and as the shells rained upon her orders were given to abandon ship. In the darkness the three boats lost sight of one another, and during the night a gale sprang up and made their position precarious. At daylight the boat in charge of Mr. Hawkins was the only one within sight of the ship, which was still burning. He had Chief Engineer Pollard and fourteen men with him, and they all agreed to go back and try to save their ship, although one man was very seriously injured and subsequently died. It was not until the next afternoon that they contrived to get alongside the tanker, through petrol burning on the surface of the water. She was still on fire amidships and aft, and petrol spurting through shell-holes in her deck as the ship rolled constantly fed the flames. A large part of her hull was red-hot and there was danger of a tremendous explosion at any moment. The bridge was totally destroyed, and with it had gone the compasses, navigating instruments, charts, power steering gear and wireless. There was little food left, and what there was could not be cooked. In spite of the fact that her case was apparently hopeless the dauntless party plugged the worst of the leaks, extinguished the fire, raised steam, and, steering "by guess and by God," got her safely to port with 11,000 tons of petrol undamaged, out of the 11,200 tons with which she had started the voyage. In the subsequent salvage action the Admiralty Court judge awarded Mr. Hawkins and Mr. Pollard £2,000 each and divided £10,700 among the rest of the party, the case being unique in the history of salvage claims in that the owners of the ship not only backed the claim against themselves in the most generous terms but guaranteed the costs of their nominal opponents before the case was heard.

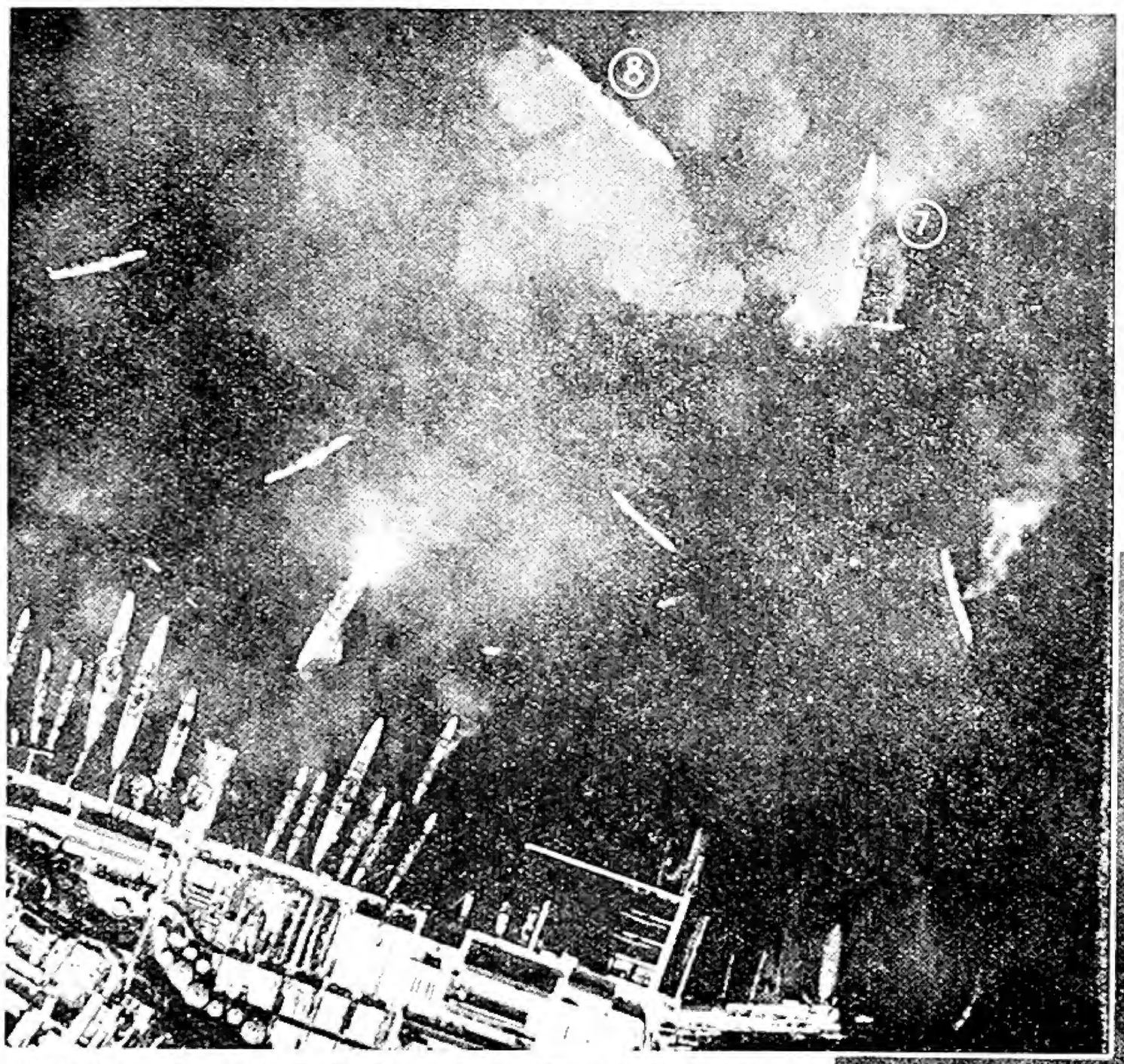
'San Demetrio' Delivers Her Oil

After the "Jervis Bay" action constant attacks were carried out against enemy bases and invasion ports, both in the Mediterranean and Western Europe, principally by the Royal Air Force and Fleet Air Arm. There were equally frequent attacks against enemy



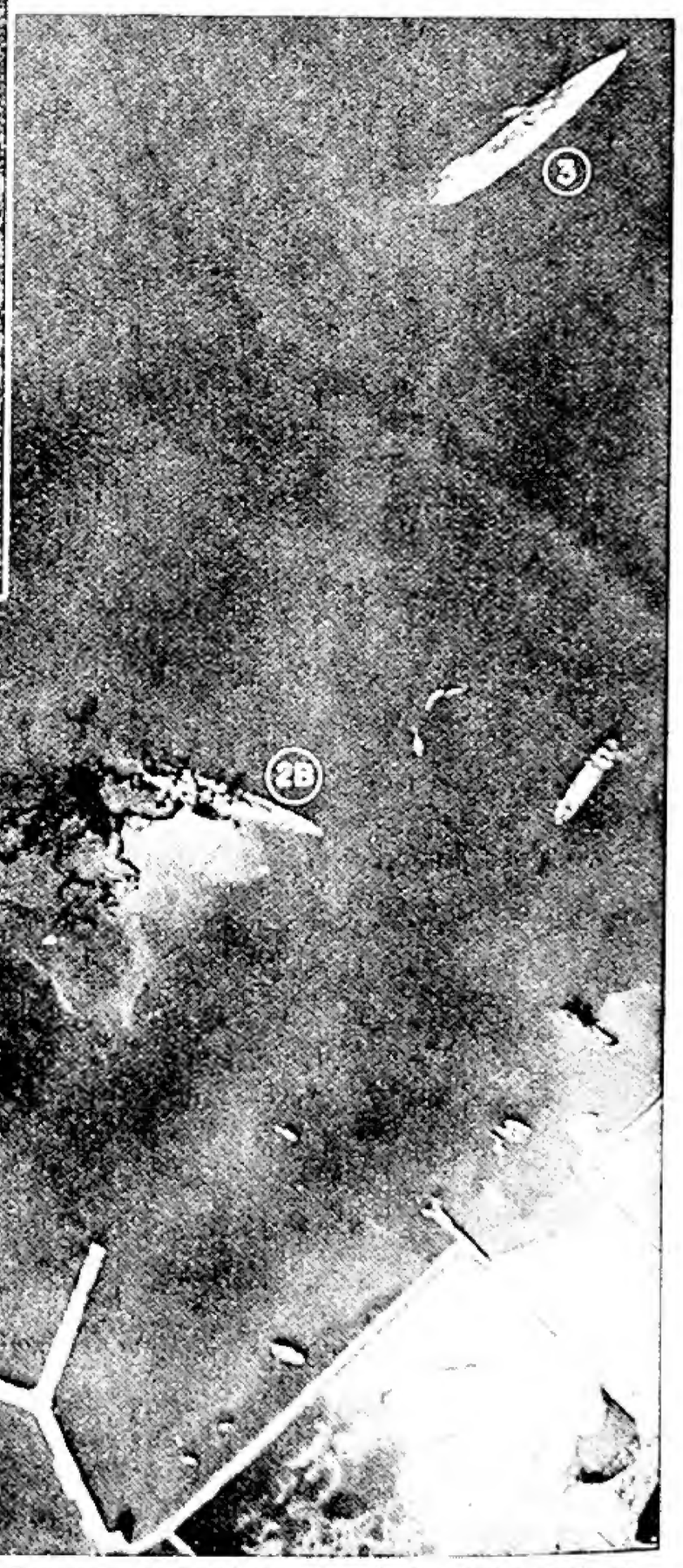
supply services along the occupied coasts from France to Norway by all arms over, on and under the sea. In these operations, however, increasing use was made of torpedo-dropping aircraft, which were beginning to make a real impression in the Services. Started by the enthusiasm of the present Vice-Admiral Sueter and the present Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, then a naval officer, before the war of 1914-18, aerial torpedo work had made a big fight for recognition, but had never been fully accepted before 1939. Now it was beginning to make a show, and with appreciation came further success. The general public paid comparatively little attention to the details of aerial tactics; an air attack was an air attack, and small notice was taken of the methods employed.

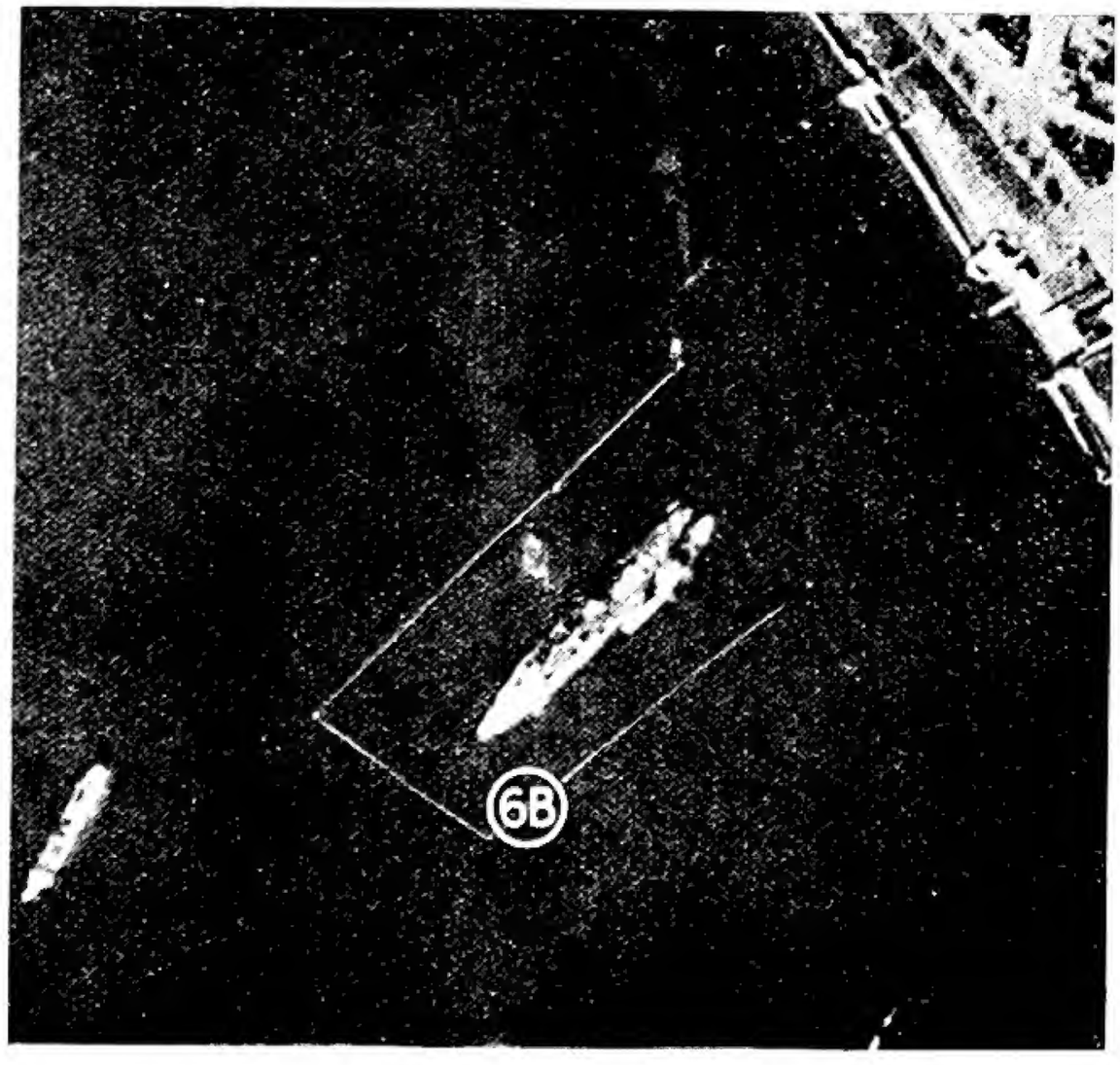
Most of the naval activity which received publicity was in the Mediterranean, in connexion with the North African and Albanian campaigns, with the British and Greek navies constantly attacking Italian communications in spite of the fact that the main Italian fleet still remained "in being" and had a sufficient numerical superiority to give it an excellent theoretical chance of success. The East African coast was a minor theatre in which the



HAVOC AMONG ENEMY WARSHIPS AT TARANTO

The two Italian cruisers (7 and 8; see also sketch map in page 1315) lying in the inner harbour showed damage to their hulls, and oil was flowing from them. Nearer the shore was another heavy cruiser, while alongside the quays were light cruisers and destroyers—many of them showing damage by the Fleet Air Arm's raid of November 11-12, 1940.





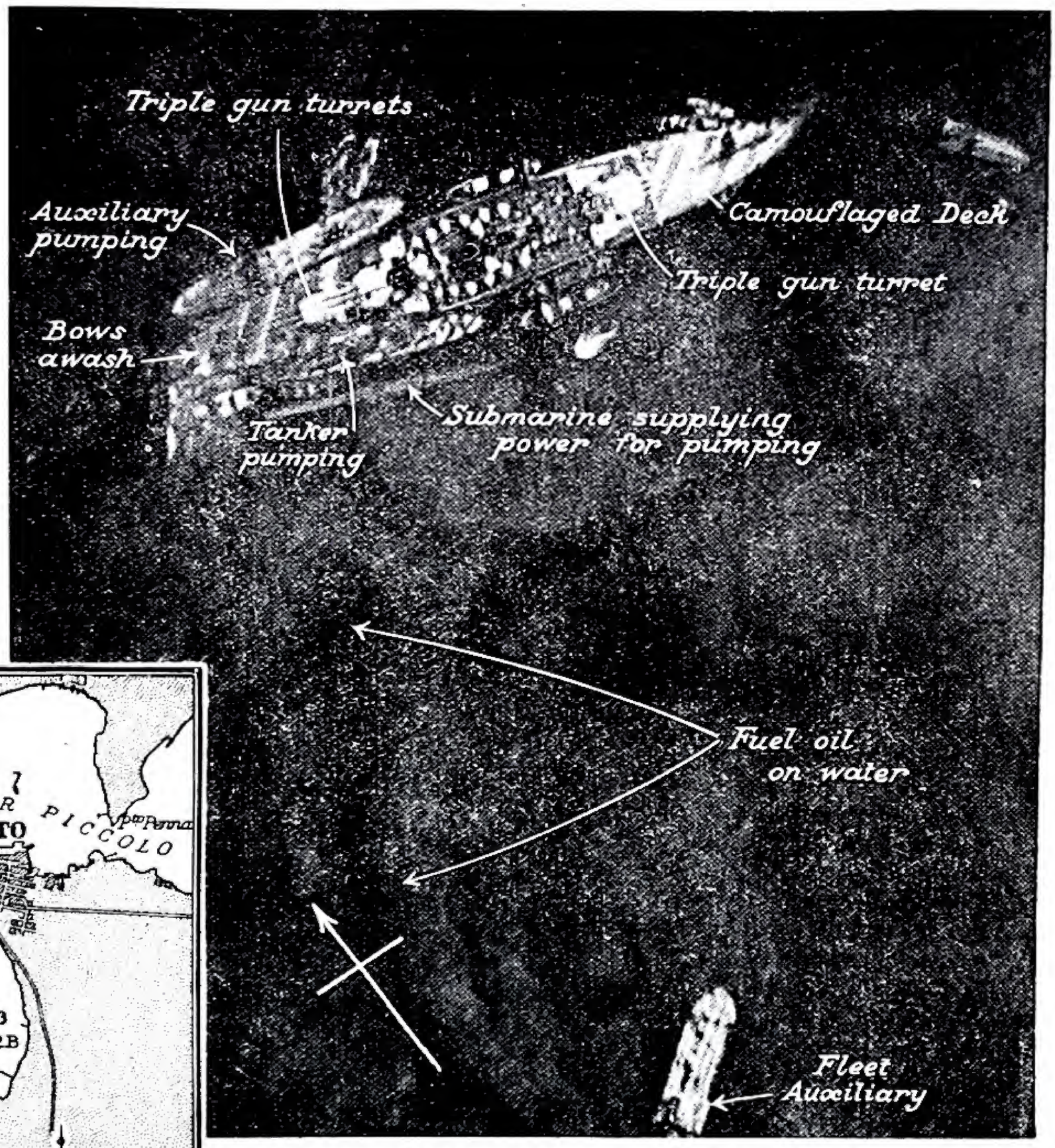
Above (marked 2B) is a Cavour class battleship, beached on the east shore of the outer harbour. Her original position was at the point marked 2A on the map in page 1315; 3 is an undamaged battleship. Left-hand photograph indicates at 6B another battleship of the Cavour class, beached and protected by torpedo netting.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Royal Navy was active, sometimes alone and sometimes with air cooperation. Efforts to bring any considerable proportion of the Italian fleet into action were consistently unsuccessful, the enemy making the utmost use of the high speed of his warships.

It was on the night of November 11–12 that the Fleet Air Arm carried out a dashing exploit at Taranto which caused a sensation. After it the possibilities of the torpedo-dropping 'plane were no longer doubted, and the Italian navy began to distrust the best of protection. A large part of the Italian fleet had been located in the protected base at Taranto, where its function was obviously to guard communications across the Adriatic for the Albanian campaign against the Greeks.

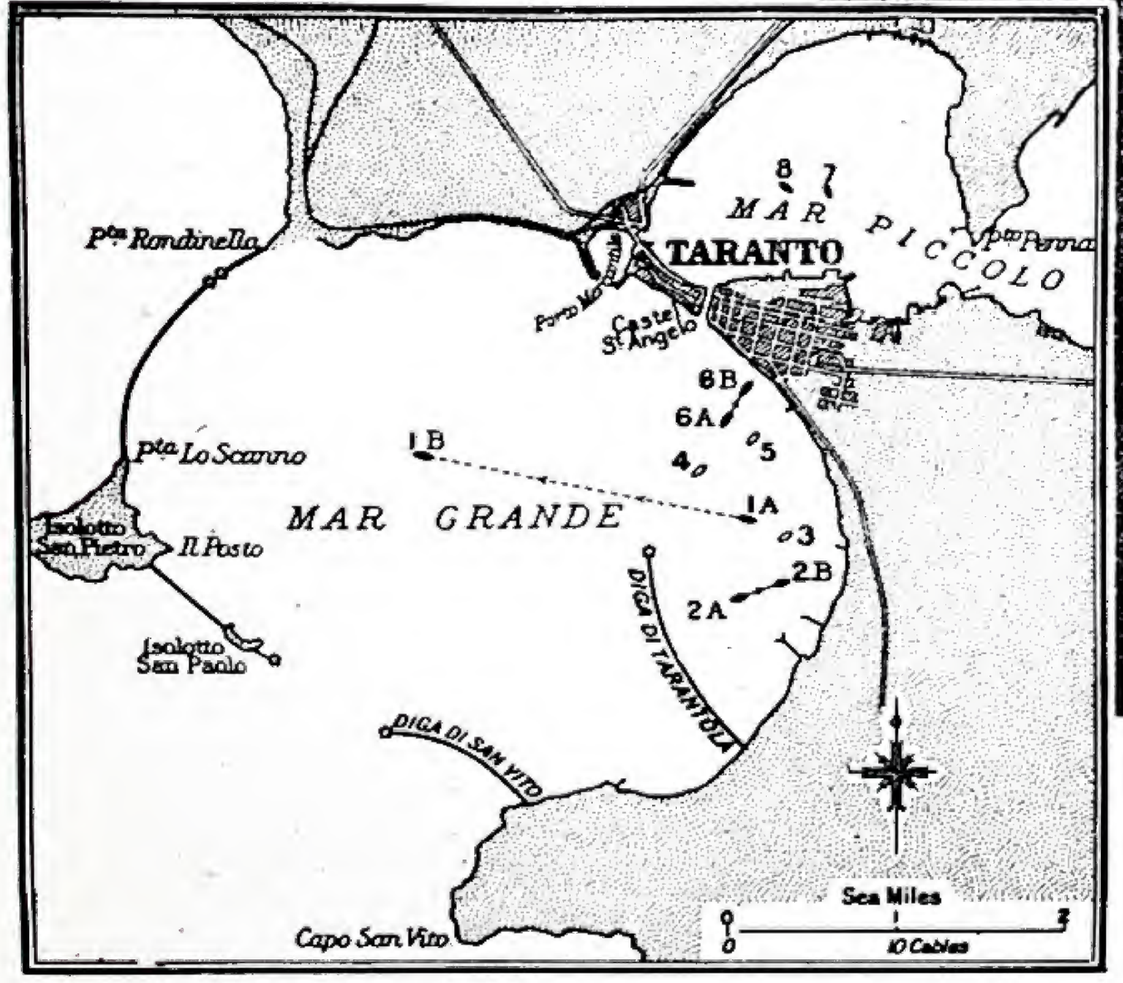
The forces in Taranto had been



INDISPUTABLE EVIDENCE OF A SPLENDID EXPLOIT

Here, disclosed by the camera of a Fleet Air Arm 'plane, is the wreck of Italy's fine 35,000-ton battleship lying in Taranto harbour after the British raid of November 11-12, 1940. She is down badly by the bows, and around are tankers, probably pumping out oil to lighten her.

Photo and map, British Official : Crown Copyright



RAID ON TARANTO HARBOUR, NOV. 11–12, 1940

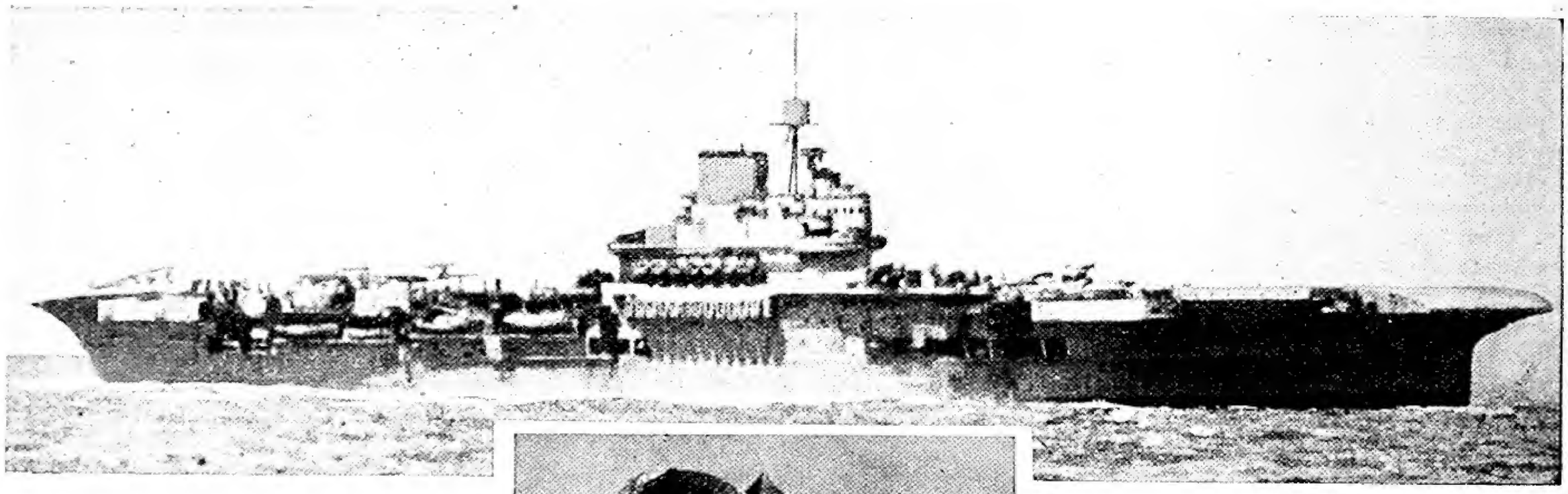
This sketch map shows the position (marked A) of the Italian warships before the attack by the Fleet Air Arm, and the points to which they were afterwards removed, indicated by the letter B. Nos. 7 and 8 are the cruisers shown in the photograph in page 1314 ; Nos. 3, 4 and 5 are undamaged enemy battleships.

examined by British reconnaissance aircraft, and consisted of all the six battleships in the Italian fleet, moored on the eastern side of the outer harbour within the shelter of the inner mole. In addition there were ten cruisers, eighteen destroyers, ten submarines, a seaplane carrier and four torpedo boats in the inner harbour, moored in the open or against the quays ; also a seaplane tender, two depot ships and four torpedo boats. Altogether this was a formidable force.

The British Staff knew Taranto well. It had been an Allied base during the war of 1914–18, when British ships there did far more work than the Italians. The harbour is shallow but well protected, completely land-locked against weather but equipped almost entirely as an operational base, few repair facilities being available. Normally the outer harbour is the commercial part, joined to the inner (naval) harbour by a very narrow channel which offered perfect protection against submarine attack but made it difficult to pass the big ships. In the inner harbour was the only dry dock, its dimensions limited for practical purposes to 711 feet by 109, but there were also some small pontoons and floating docks suitable for serving destroyers, submarines and small craft.

This big fleet, in a well-protected base, was attacked by the Fleet Air Arm on the night of November 11–12. The machines used were flown off H.M. aircraft carriers " Illustrious " and " Eagle," the newest and oldest in the Fleet, and consisted of eleven Fairey Swordfish torpedo 'planes and ten Glen Martin Maryland bombers. The latter were the latest addition to the Service's material ; the Fairey Swordfish were of the 1935 type with certain modernizations. The Fairey Albacore 'plane, an improvement on this type, was not used. Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham was in supreme command, and Rear-Admiral Arthur Lyster was in command of the aircraft carriers.

The covering warships remained well out to sea and the 'planes took off on their formidable task. It would seem to offer very little chance of success, for the port was known to be well protected by a large number of anti-aircraft guns, and besides those mounted on land each of the two battleships



of the Littorio class mounted twelve 3·5 and forty small anti-aircraft guns; two of the Cavour class had eight 3·9-inch and thirty-six small, and the other two had ten 3·5 and thirty-nine small. The 10,000-ton cruisers had twelve 3·9 and eighteen small guns each; the smaller cruisers of the Condottieri class had six to eight 3·9 and sixteen small; and most of the destroyers were armed with 4·7 and smaller guns. Quite apart from the guns designed for high-angle firing, the low altitude to which torpedo 'planes have to descend gives the chance of using all guns against them, but in this case the Italians were handicapped by the close quarters of the harbour and the chance of hitting their friends with low-angle fire.

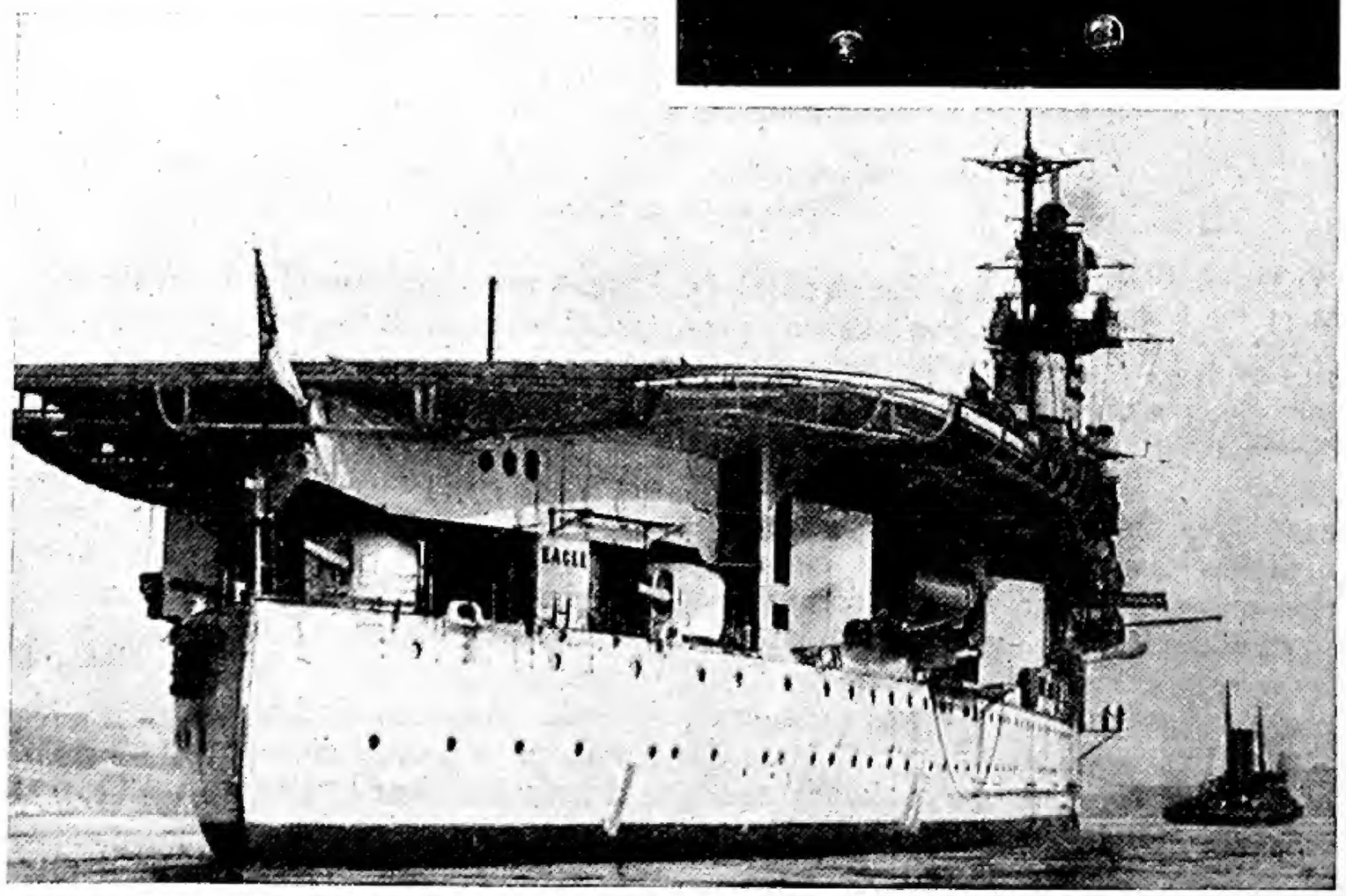


Apart from these heavy defences the conditions were most satisfactory to the attackers. The biggest ships were moored well away from the quays, leaving enough sea-room to launch the torpedoes. There was little wind; and a bright three-quarter moon gave help in spotting, a certain amount of cloud affording welcome protection. The aircraft took off just after dark. The bombers dropped flares to guide the torpedo 'planes and to show up the position of the strong balloon barrage, which was the most worrying obstacle. The torpedo 'planes made a glide from 5,000 feet to between 50 and 100, dropped their torpedoes and rose again through the obstructions, only two being lost despite very heavy anti-aircraft fire.

Raid on Taranto

Special mention should be made of one bomber 'plane which had been damaged by accident shortly before the attack and was supposed to be out of action. Her crew were so keen that permission was granted them to take part in the attack; the 'plane was very late in starting and had the unique distinction of carrying out a lone-hand raid on the inner harbour when the enemy was well prepared for any surprise.

Luckily conditions were favourable for photographs to be taken on the 12th, the day after the raid, and still better ones on the 14th. They showed the battleship "Littorio" beached, with her forecastle head submerged, one battleship of the Cavour class lying on the bottom, and another beached. Two cruisers in the inner harbour had a heavy list, oil fuel leaking from them showing clearly, and two of the auxiliaries had their sterns under water. At the end of February, 1941, the damaged battleships were still in the same position, the cruisers had been moved, and there was no further intelligence about the auxiliaries. The "Littorio" was later taken to Venice for repairs, and the older battleship with the lesser damage to



AIRCRAFT CARRIERS IN THE ATTACK ON TARANTO

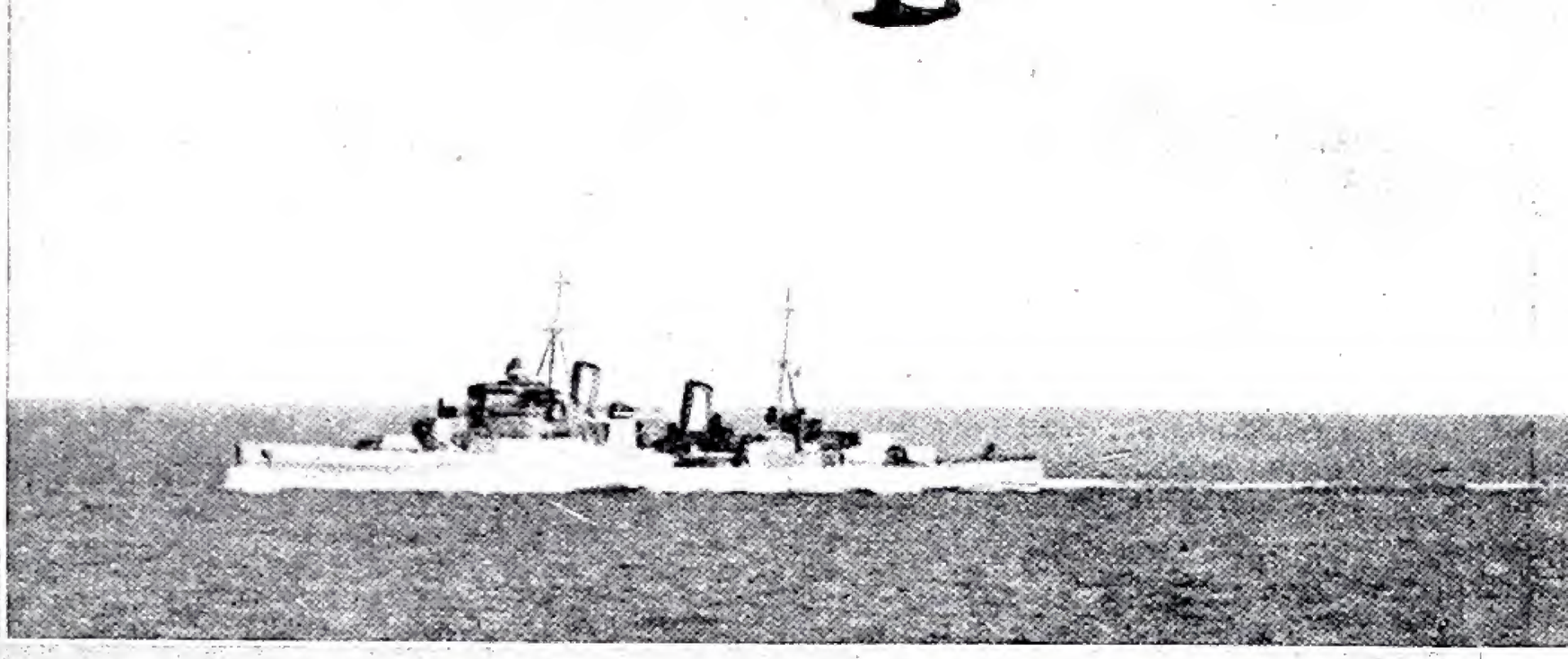
The Fairey Swordfish torpedo 'planes and Glen Martin Maryland bombers (see illus. page 1336), which, on the night of November 11-12, made a daring attack on enemy warships at Taranto, were launched from the carriers 'Illustrious' (top) and 'Eagle' (bottom), newest and oldest in the Navy. The carriers were commanded by Rear-Admiral Arthur L. St. G. Lyster, C.B., C.V.O., D.S.O., who later was appointed Chief of Naval Air Services.

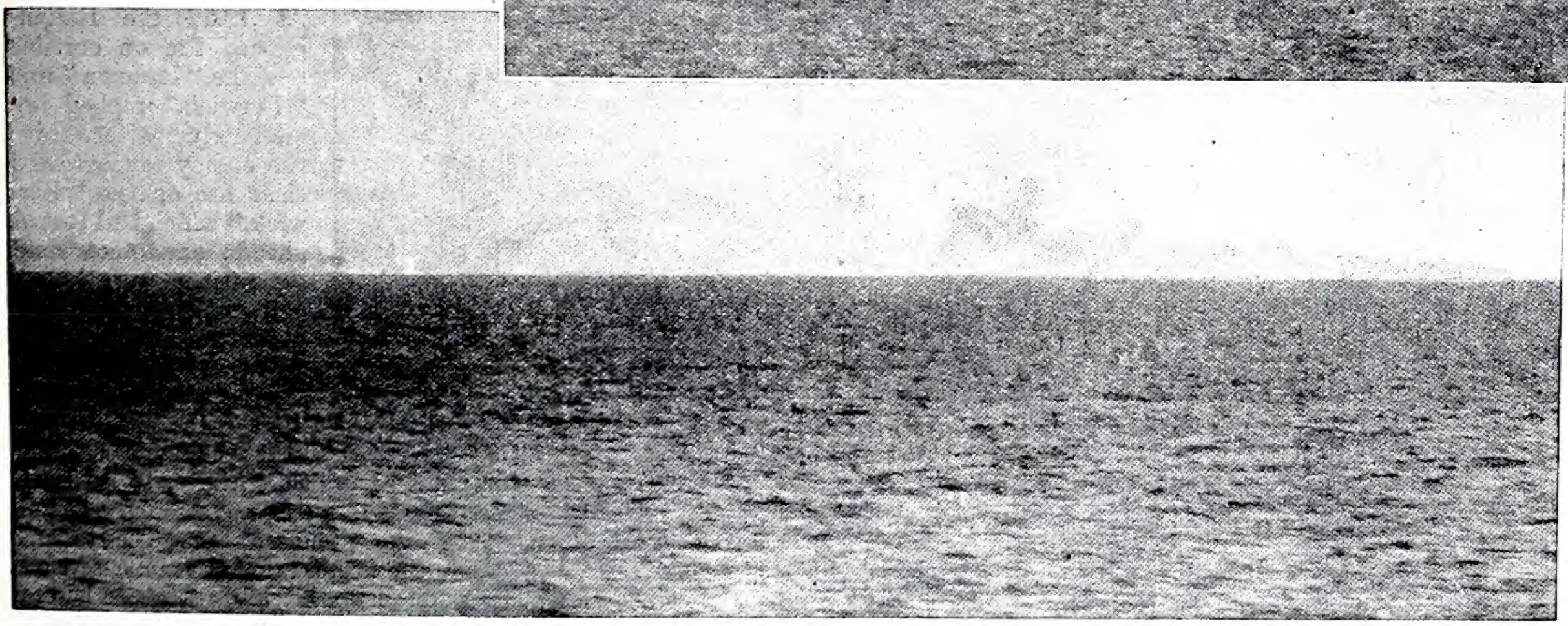
Photos, Topical; Hay Wrightson; Central Press

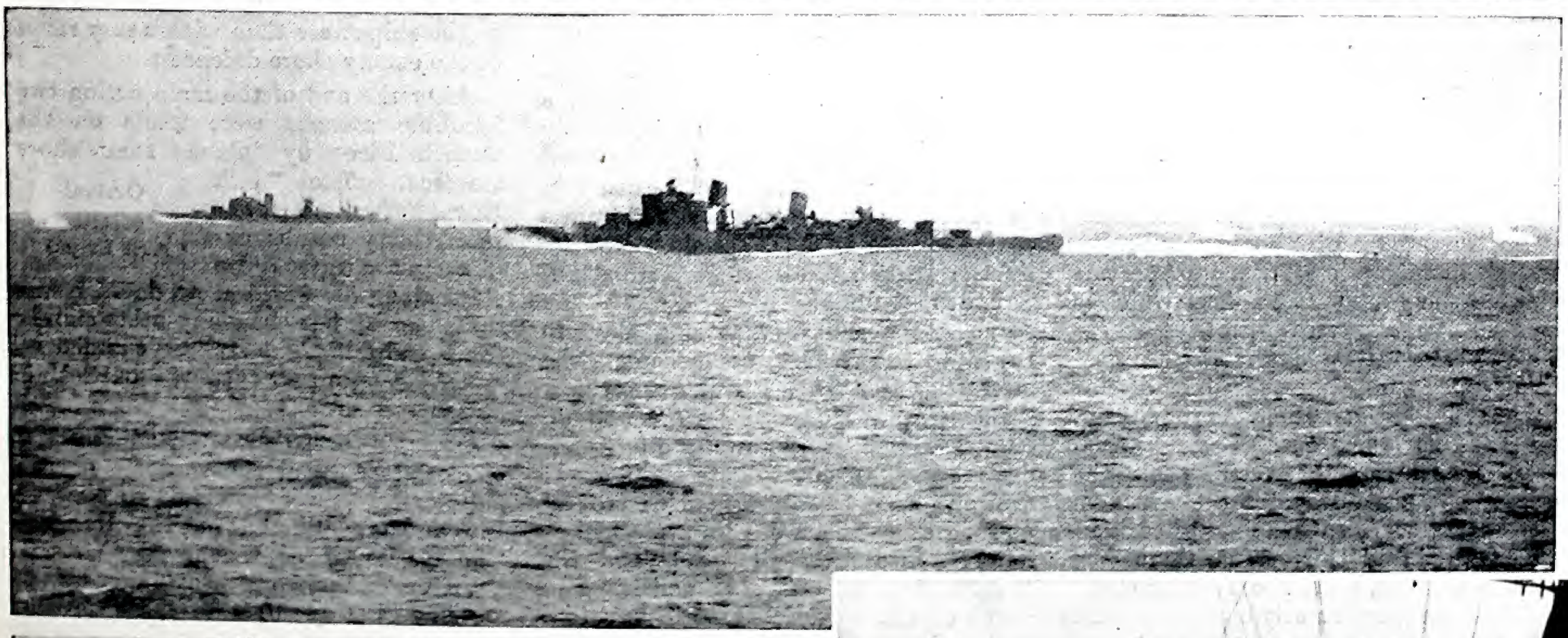
NAVAL ACTION OFF SARDINIA

Top, right, British reconnaissance 'plane (flying over H.M.S. 'Manchester') which spotted the Italian warships on November 27, 1940. Below, part of the enemy fleet on the horizon; and H.M.S. 'Southampton' and another British cruiser under fire. Bottom of page, shells of a British salvo fall close to an Italian warship (left); right, an enemy battleship, zigzagging, fires its after guns.

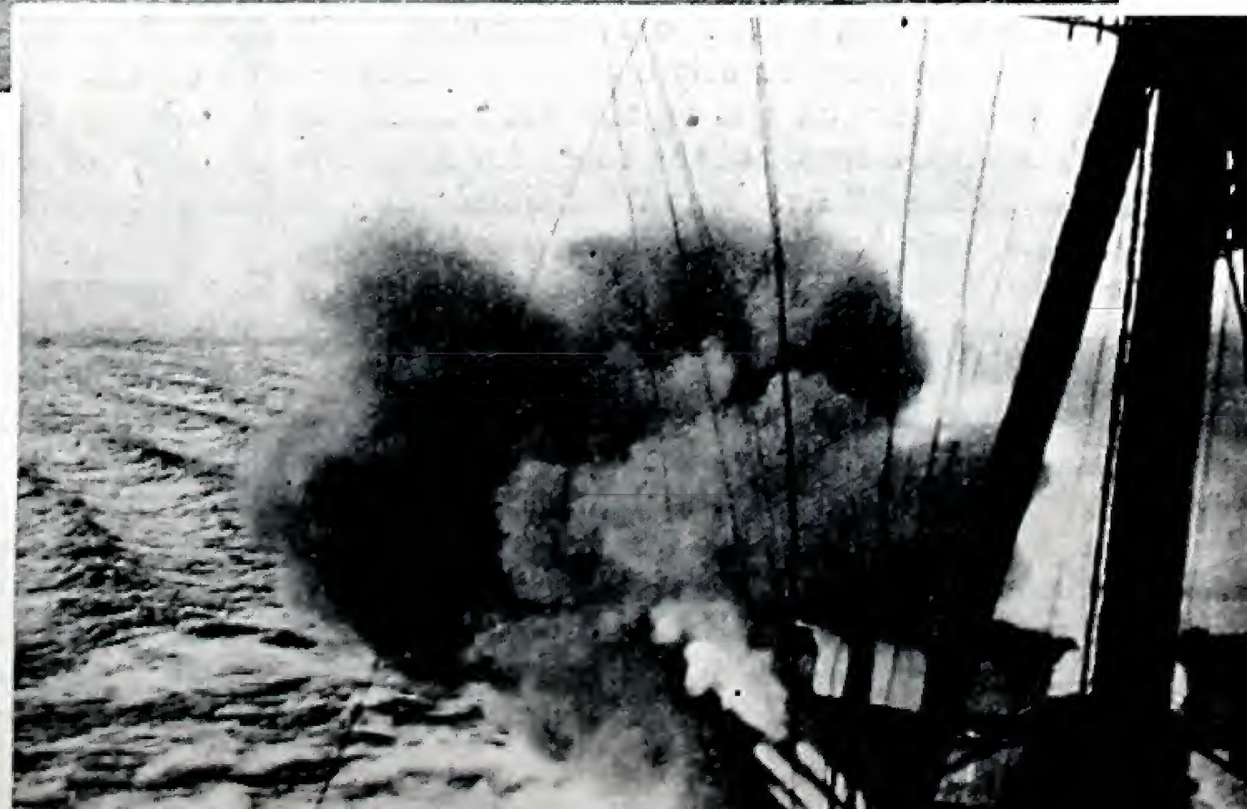
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; G.P.U.; Keystone

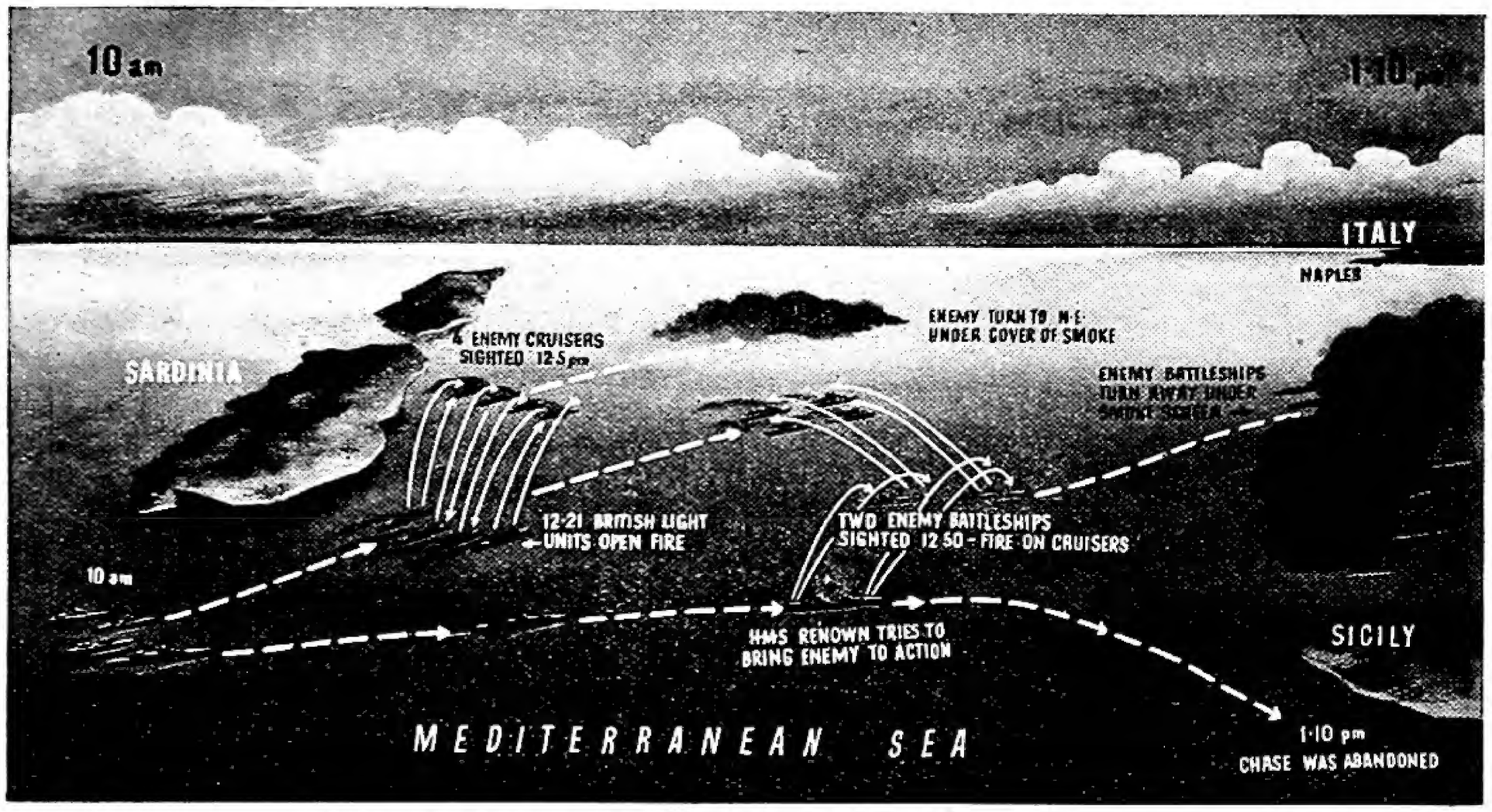












THE RUNNING FIGHT OFF SARDINIA

On the morning of Nov. 27, 1940, British Naval aircraft observed enemy warships (later found to include battleships, cruisers and destroyers) off the coast of Sardinia. Heavy and lighter units of the Royal Navy set out to intercept the Italians, and the course of the operations until the enemy turned away and made off under cover of a smoke screen is here shown.

Courtesy of "The Sphere"

Spezia, but the other of the Cavour class had had to be abandoned. Some amusement was caused by the Italian navy having to employ a Jewish expert, Signor Pugiese, to raise these ships. To begin with, the Italians claimed that the damage was insignificant, but shortly afterwards the "Frankfurter Zeitung," under official censorship, gave the game away by talking of "some devil-may-care foolhardy pilots . . . damage was done to the young Italian fleet which is only in its most painful growing stages . . . the loss will be felt for a long time." The Italians were mortally offended at this revelation by their Axis partner, but the secret was out.

In recognition of their work the personnel of the Royal Fleet Air Arm were awarded two Distinguished Service Orders and thirteen Distinguished Service Crosses, besides other honours.

While this particularly dashing assault was being carried out on the main fleet at Taranto, aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm from H.M.S. "Ark Royal" raided the Cagliari air base in Sardinia (used for enemy attack on the British Navy and shipping in lieu of Italian aircraft carriers), and light forces penetrated the Adriatic defences as far as Valona, off which port they cut up a supply convoy destined for the Italian armies in Albania. In sharp contrast to the behaviour of the "Jervis Bay" in the Atlantic, both the Italian destroyers which were responsible for the safety of this convoy made off as fast as possible under a smoke screen, leaving the merchant ships to their fate.

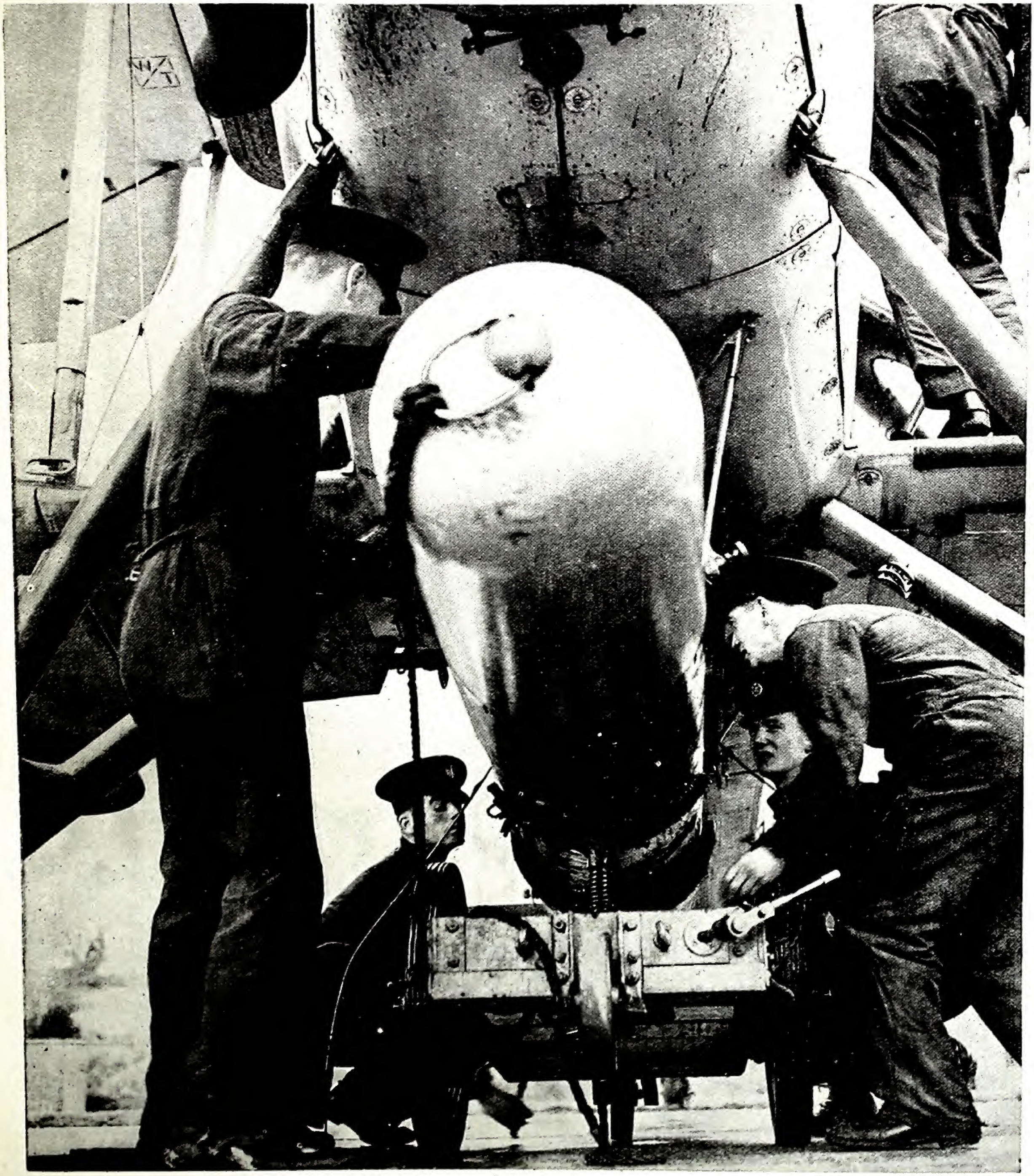
The month ended on a high note after most of the surviving Italian warships from Taranto had gone to Cagliari, a base where they could feel reasonably safe but which was much too far west for them to be any help to the army in Albania. Venturing to sea, several units of this force were intercepted on Nov. 27 by the British Western Mediterranean Squadron under Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville (with his flag in the "Renown"), comprising the aircraft carrier "Ark Royal," the cruiser "Berwick," "slower units" which included a battleship, and a number of destroyers. Two enemy battleships, eight cruisers and twenty-seven destroyers and other vessels were known to have left Taranto after the raid, and the Italian fleet encountered consisted of two battleships (the "Vittorio Veneto" and one of the Cavour class), with a number of cruisers and destroyers. When sighted they were steaming south-east.

The enemy was first reported by reconnaissance 'planes from the "Ark Royal" to be 20 miles off the Sardinian coast and 70 from the British Fleet, which was then considerably scattered. In calm weather with bright sunshine the British warships were collected as quickly as possible and steamed eastward at full speed; the "Renown" led the line, with the other fast ships close on her heels, but the slower battleship dropped astern steadily in spite of the efforts of her crew. The "Ark Royal" flew off torpedo 'planes at long range, to be met with heavy anti-aircraft fire, while Skuas dive-bombed a formation of three Condottieri class cruisers. At 12.22 the Italians opened fire on our line and the "Renown" and "Berwick" replied immediately afterwards; the enemy concentrated their fire on the "Berwick," which had forged ahead; one officer and six ratings were killed, and nine wounded, but there was no material damage. The course of the British squadron was kept parallel to that of the Italians and to the north, since the enemy cruisers and destroyers were known to be fitted for minelaying and a stern chase would have involved undue risks. The Italians made the utmost use of smoke screens to avoid being hit, and the chase had to be abandoned at ten minutes past one, as the ships were then within easy range of the enemy shore defences.

Ordeal of the 'Ark Royal'

After the end of the main action two bombing attacks were made on the British Fleet by 'planes from shore stations. The "Ark Royal" had no fewer than thirty bombs exploded in the water quite close alongside her, but no damage was sustained by her or by any other ship in the squadron. The Italians claimed to have hit an aircraft carrier, a battleship and a cruiser.

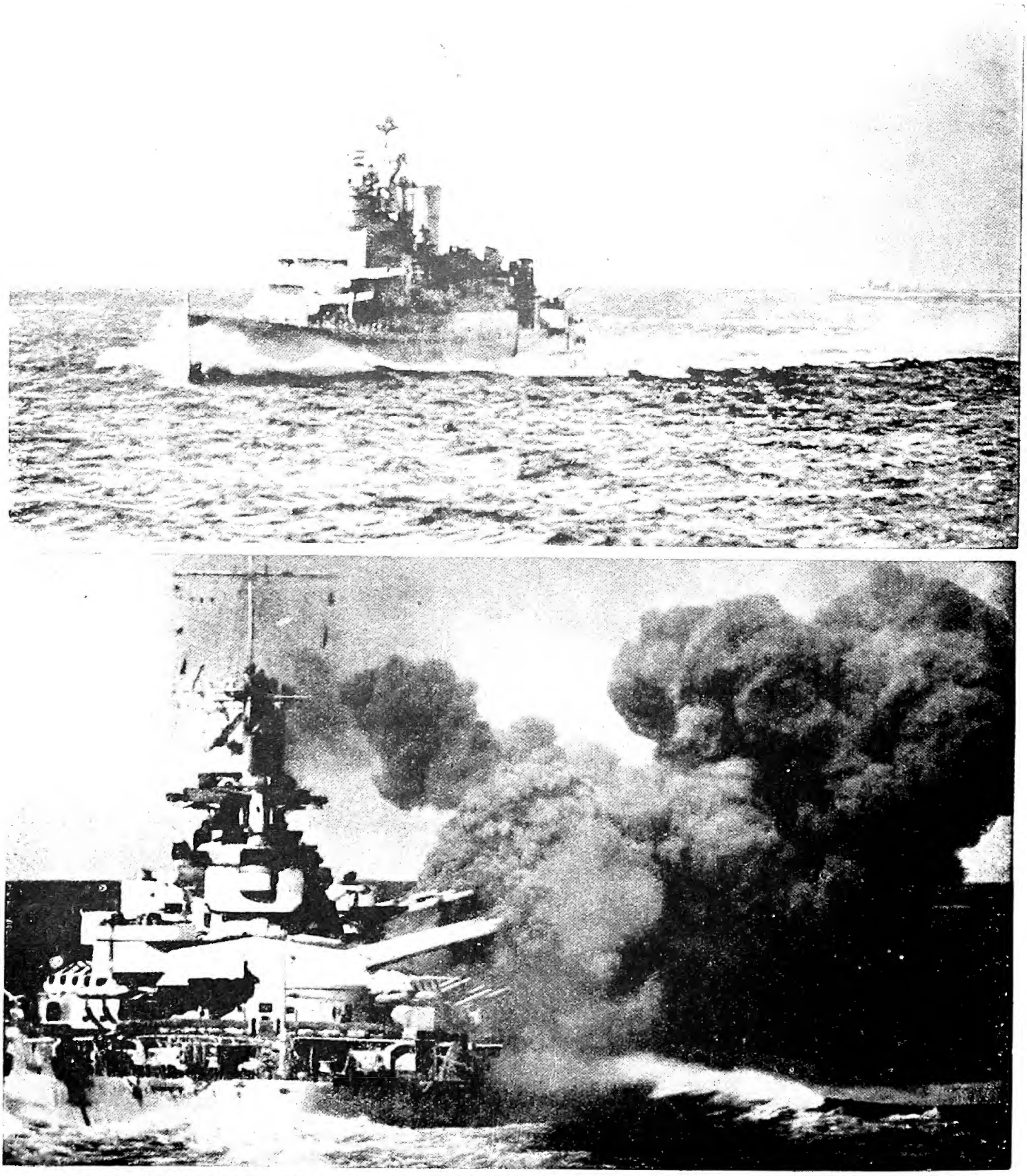
Owing to the extreme range, the enemy smoke screen and the rapidity of the action, it was very difficult to observe the damage inflicted on the Italians. The Fleet Air Arm believed that the "Vittorio Veneto" was hit by a torpedo, that one 10,000-ton cruiser was set on fire aft, one smaller cruiser damaged amidships, and a destroyer so badly damaged that she stopped and had to be towed in. The Italians admitted that the 10,000-ton "Fiume" had been hit and the new destroyer "Lanciere" badly damaged, but they made no mention of the battleship. The actual material damage inflicted was in any circumstances of secondary importance compared with the moral effect of such a superior fleet having to fly to the protection of its shore fortifications, after it had abandoned the post of duty allotted to it in support of the army.



ATTACHING AN R.A.F. TORPEDO-BOMB TO A FAIREY SWORDFISH

One of the most destructive weapons of the war was the torpedo-bomb carried by British aircraft. Here is one being loaded on to a 'plane. It is similar to those which caused such havoc to the Italian fleet on the night of November 11-12, when machines of the Fleet Air Arm attacked Mussolini's ships in Taranto harbour.

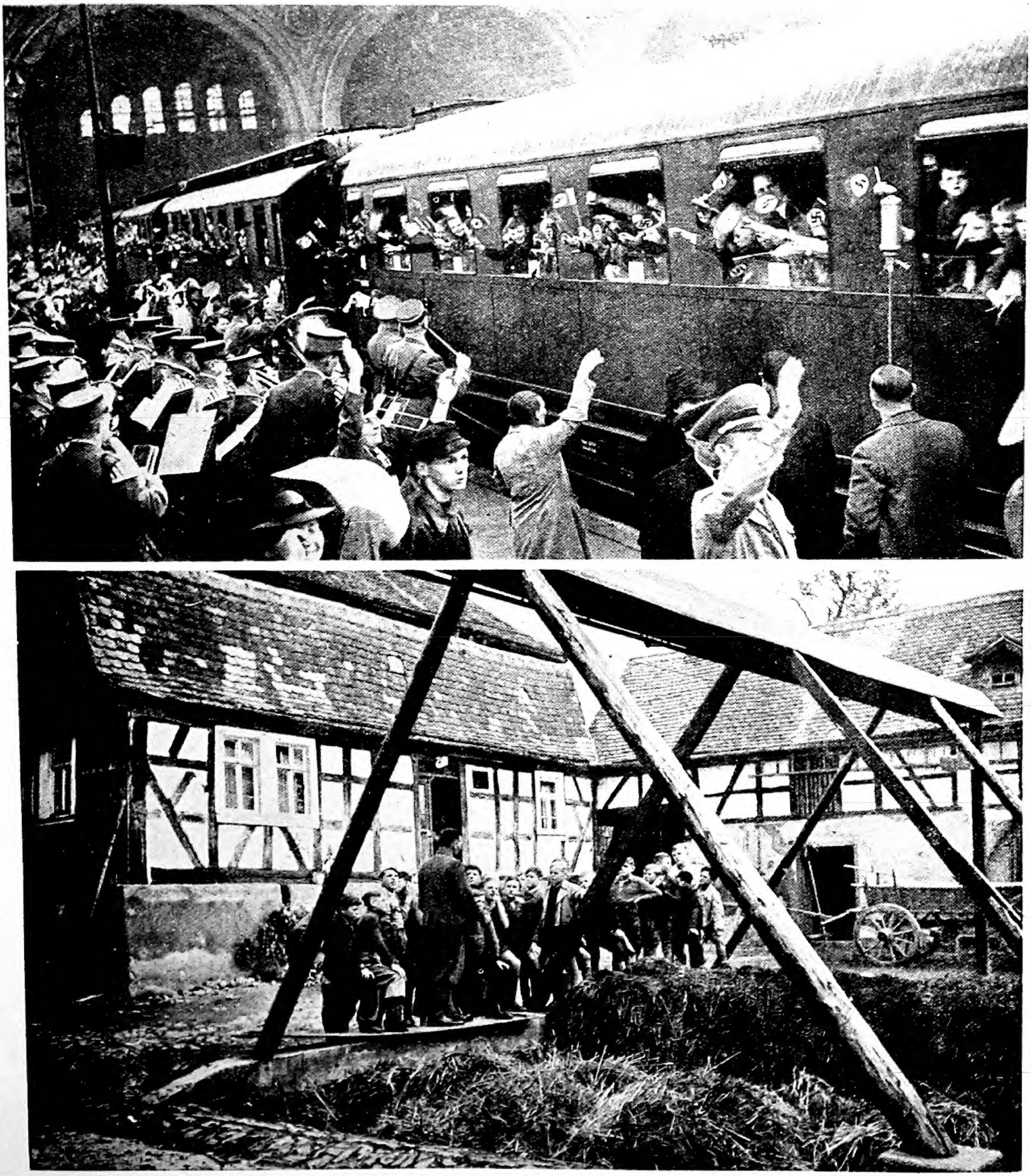
Photo, Keystone



OPPOSING BATTLESHIPS IN THE FLEET ACTION OFF SARDINIA

H.M.S. 'Renown' (top), flying the flag of Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville, with 'Ark Royal,' 'Berwick' and slower units, inflicted heavy damage on Italian ships intercepted on November 27, 1940, some twenty miles off Sardinia. A torpedo from a Fleet Air Arm 'plane hit the enemy battleship 'Vittorio Veneto,' seen in the lower photograph, but the vessel contrived to reach port. A 10,000-ton enemy cruiser was set on fire and another smaller one damaged; an Italian destroyer also was severely damaged

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Keystone



WHEN BERLINERS BEGAN TO DREAD BRITISH RAIDS

Belatedly, and only after severe bombing had been felt in British cities, the German capital was brought within the ever-widening scope of British raids. Between the end of August, 1940, and the end of December 35 raids were carried out on military objectives around Berlin. In October there was a great evacuation of German children from threatened towns. Top, a party is seen leaving Berlin, and, below, a class being instructed in help to be given to farmers.

Photos, Associated Press



HITLER EXPOUNDS THE NAZI VIEW OF NIGHT BOMBING

In a strange speech made to munition workers of a Berlin factory on December 10, 1940, the Fuehrer alleged that he had forborne to order night raids until the R.A.F. had attacked Freiburg. Not a single armament factory had been smashed, he claimed, and stated that one of the favourite targets of the R.A.F. had been hospitals! Above, Hitler, with Goebbels and Ley, leaving the platform after his speech

Photo, Keystone

Chapter 126

INSIDE GERMANY: NAZI DOUBTS AND FEARS AFTER THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

Why the Younger Germans Were Enthusiastic—A Promised Utopia—Throwing the Blame Upon Britain—Plunder From the Ravaged Lands—Reactions to British Bombing—Unconquered Britain Bars the Way to 'Final Victory'—Effects of the Blockade—Goebbels' Frantic Propaganda—The Financial Outlook

HITLER'S rapid conquest of France and the Low Countries, coupled with the comparative ease with which Poland, Denmark and Norway had fallen to German arms, seemed in the midsummer of 1940 to provide every reason for jubilation on the part of the German people. But conflicting reports came from Germany. On the one hand, the enthusiasm with which Hitler and Nazi leaders were greeted wherever they went or spoke seemed to denote high German morale; on the other, competent neutral observers reported a surprising lack of enthusiasm in the big industrial centres for German military victories.

In this connexion we must differentiate between the younger and the older Germans. The younger people, who, when Hitler came to power, were just entering or in their teens, could not remember the time when food, clothing and confectionery shops had been stocked with supplies to be bought by anybody having the necessary money. They had come to accept the war economy imposed on Germany by Hitler as a normal standard of life, to be replaced by a period of abundance when Germany's mission of world domination should be accomplished. What these young people did recollect, and were told, of the pre-Hitler era filled them with abhorrence for "Jewish international financiers" and with hate of Britain and other democracies for endeavouring to perpetuate what the young Germans deemed an unjust international order, with its attendant evils of unemployment, trade slumps, and internal political enmities.

Hitler's war economy gave the young people their chance. Whether in the German air force, the army or navy, or as Gestapo agents, they had abundant food of good quality. They did not have to worry about the future, which was assured by Hitler's overriding genius. In the German-occupied countries they could live well. Transport 'planes left airfields in France, the Low Countries and Norway packed with fur coats, or with chocolates, butter, hams and other delicacies, purchased with worthless mark currency for sweethearts and relatives in the "Heimat." The châteaux of France provided luxurious quarters for many hundreds of young Nazi hooligans.

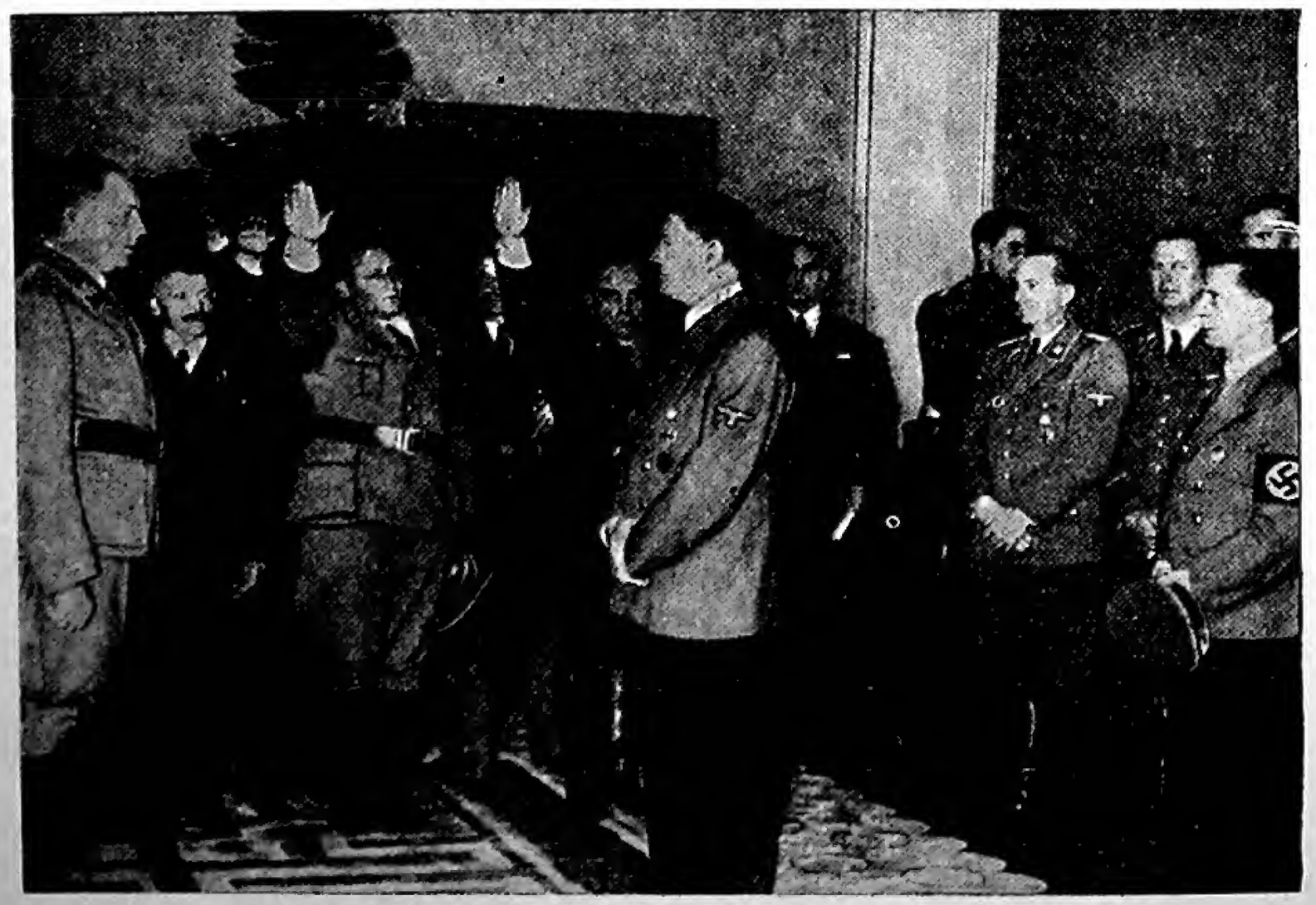
The country residences of Dutch and Belgian merchants and nobility re-echoed to the uproarious songs of convalescing German pilots and staff officers of all categories. In the well-stocked cellars they found superb wines. Leave was not unduly restricted.

The young Germans—those between the ages of 19 and 26, who formed the bulk of the crack pilots and Panzer regiments—were in short having a very good time. Hitler was their god. They were supremely confident of bringing the war to a successful conclusion. It was not upon these young folk that the arts of Dr. Goebbels' propaganda were exercised. His task was to maintain the morale of the older people, working long hours in the bombed factories of the Ruhr, with large deductions for taxation from their wages—the people with ration cards who remembered Germany's "inevitable" victory in 1914 and compared Hitler's apparent halt after the conquest of France with the period of the Battle of the Marne in 1914. Their greatest desire was for peace, abundant food and clothes, and a return (but without the evils of unemployment) to peace.

After the conquest of France the Nazi propaganda machine went full speed ahead on this aspect of Hitlerism.

Grandiose Plans

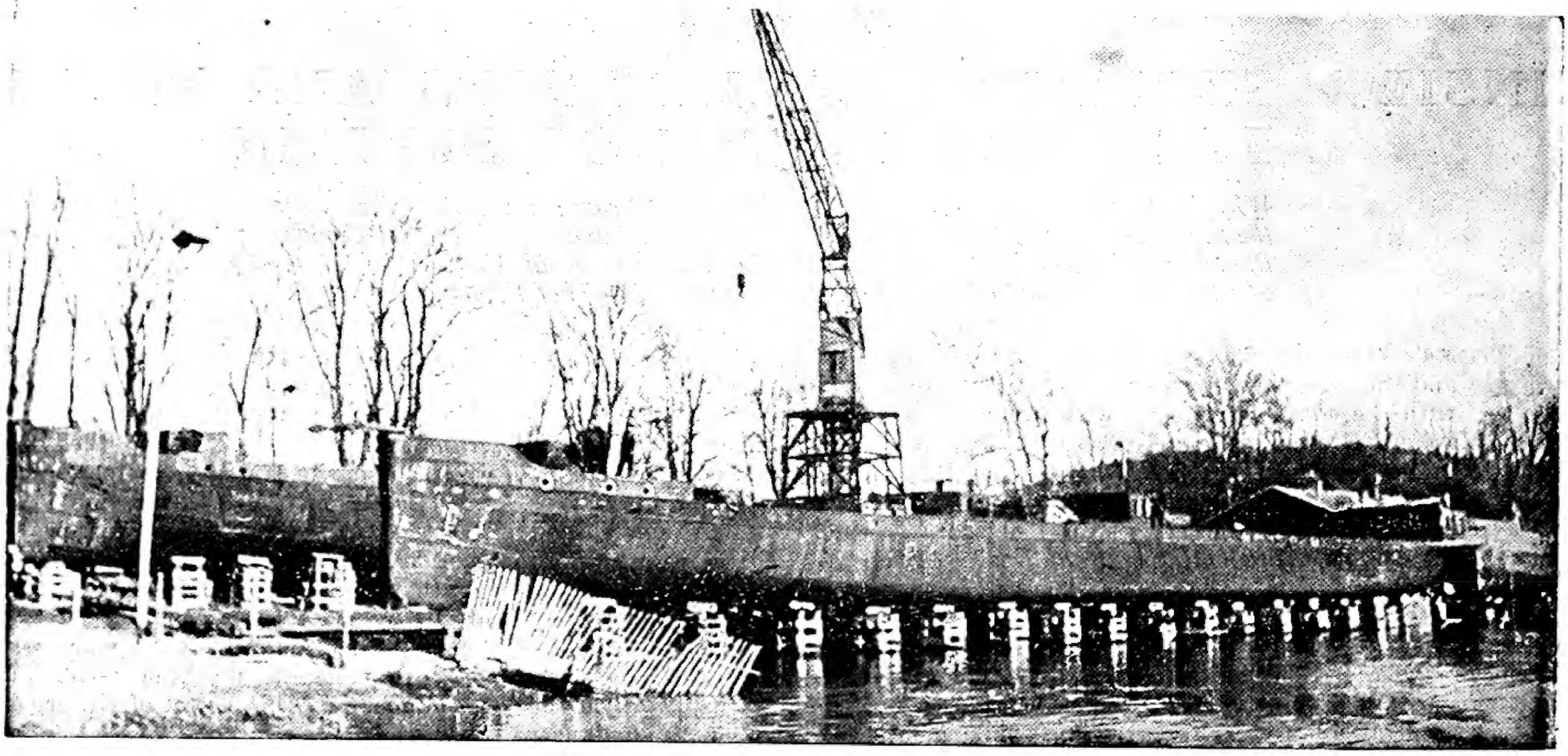
Blitzkrieg, blitz peace and blitz prosperity were assured, the Germans in the war industries were told. Grandiose plans for a Utopian age were announced, with the proposed inauguration of a centrally controlled Kontinental Mittel-Europaeischer Wirtschaftsraum (Continental Central Europe Economic Region) extending from Gibraltar to the Vistula and from the Norwegian coasts



WHY PEOPLE WENT SHORT IN THE OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

The German caption to this photograph of Hitler addressing food supply officers describes them as the men who obtain plentiful supplies from the East and the West—in other words, from the unfortunate lands overrun by the Nazis. Facing Hitler is Darre, Reichsminister of Food and Agriculture; behind the Fuehrer are Goebbels and the Nazi Press chief, Dietrich.

Photo, Keystone



GERMANY FEELS THE WEIGHT OF THE BRITISH BLOCKADE

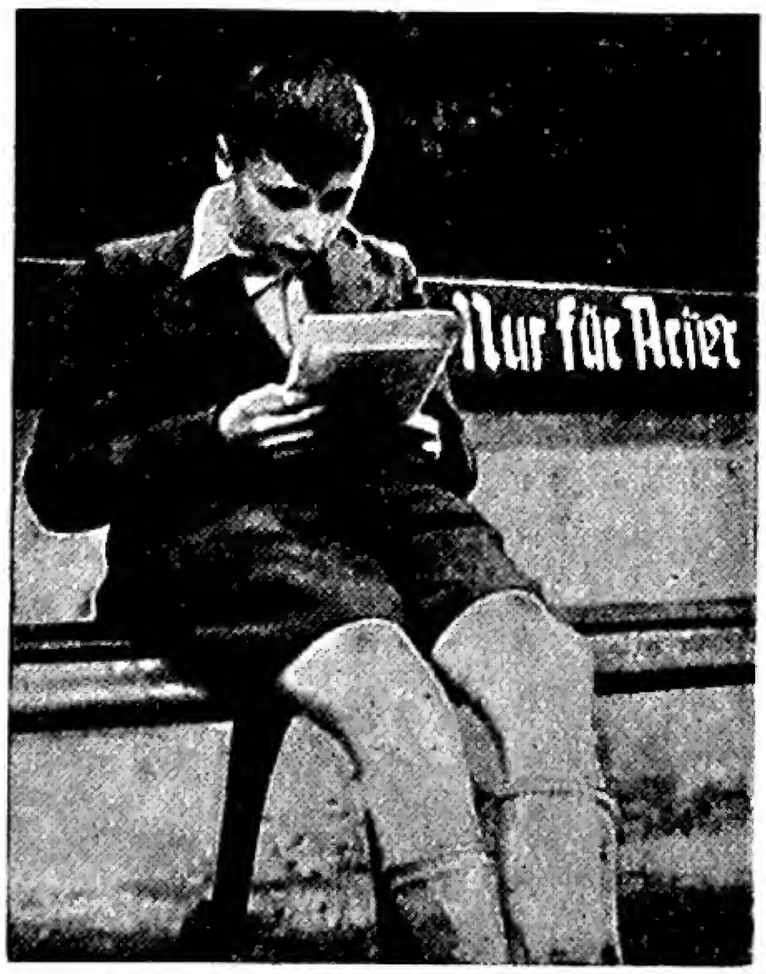
In order to convey oil and synthetic motor fuel from her refineries, which had become of vital importance owing to the cutting off of oversea supplies by the Allies, Germany built many tankers such as those here seen. It is probable that they were intended for use on canals.

Photo, Keystone

to Sicily. Gold economy, the source of all cause of unemployment, had been dethroned, Goebbels proclaimed. The age of social security had arrived.

These hopes were further stimulated by German industrialists, who offered steel to South America with a cash guarantee of delivery in October. Hamburg shipowners advised owners of cotton mills in Ecuador to have cotton ready for German vessels in September. German tourist offices made preparations for a late summer season. New posters—" Visit Heidelberg and the Rhineland "—appeared in windows, and leaflets were circulated announcing that the Bayreuth Wagnerian festival would be held as usual. The Maginot Line was to become the world's greatest show piece, while rumour was busy that free railway vouchers were to be issued for tourist purposes to the long-suffering German worker. The young people were at the same time promised easy jobs as members of the new ruling class. The new social age envisaged by Herr Rosenberg, fanatic, unbalanced Nazi philosopher, provided for the extension of Hitler " Fuehrer " schools throughout the Reich, where young Nazis were to learn the administration of conquered territories.

Small wonder that peace rumours were also abundant. The Duke of Windsor's stay in Madrid was adroitly used to represent a German move to replace the " warmongering " Chamberlain " gang " by a ruler amenable to Nazi ideas. The movements of British diplomats were surrounded with Nazi-inspired rumours of coming peace moves. Hitler recognized this desire for peace among the older Germans by his speech in the Kroll Opera House in July,



BENCHES FOR ARYANS IN VIENNA

In the famous Prater at Vienna the benches are lettered ' Nur für Arier ' (' Only for Aryans '). Despite the risks, a young Jewish boy sat on one and posed for the photographer.

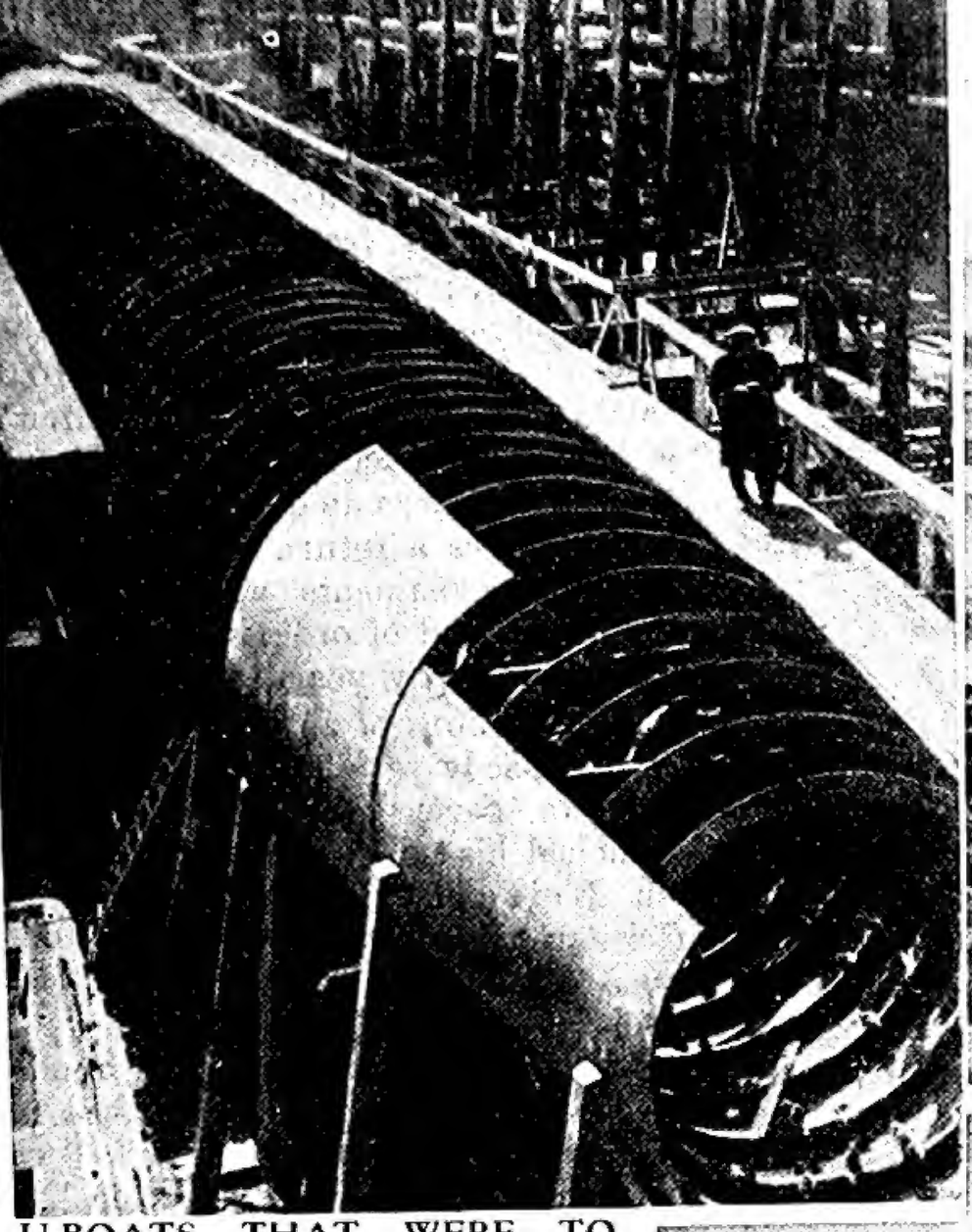
Photo, Keystone

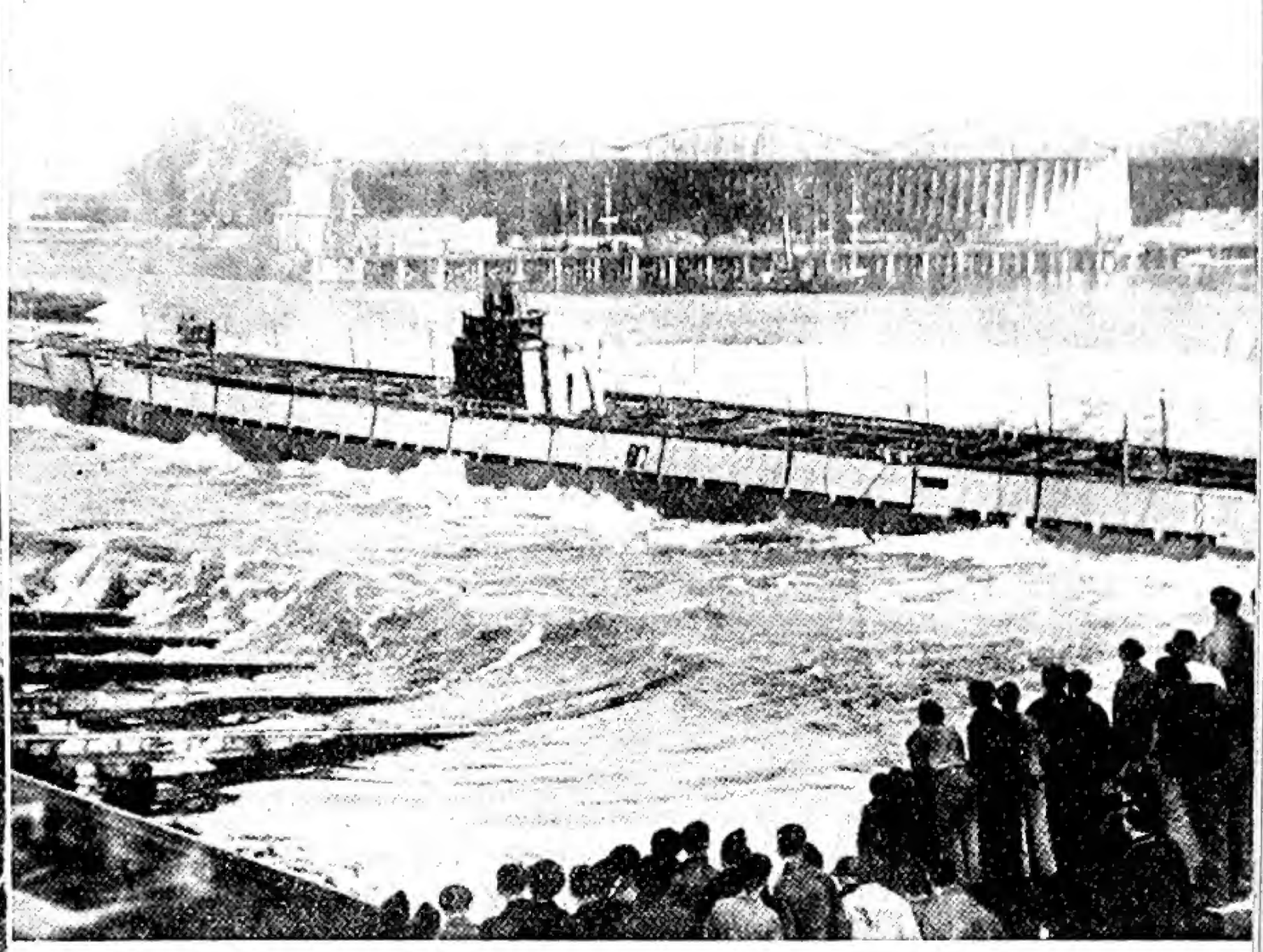
when he stated : " I can see no reason why this war must go on. I am grieved to think of the sacrifices it will claim."

Thus did Hitler attempt to throw the blame for a continuation of hostilities upon the " capitalist warmongers " of Britain, and to persuade the German people to accept a further period of uncertainty and privation in the event of Britain refusing to compromise. The older generation of Germans, therefore, accepted with resignation the replacement of Chamberlain as Premier by Winston Churchill, with its corollary of an intensified British war effort. " Wir fahren gegen Engel-Land " (" We are going out to fight England ") was the favourite song of young and old alike. Annihilation of the " wicked " British nation and a speedy entry of the Nazi Panzer troops into London were freely prophesied.

Britain was the Barrier

Meanwhile, supplies from the occupied countries began to arrive in increasing quantities to compensate the German for the continued black-out. " With Holland our vegetable garden, France our vineyard, Denmark our dairy, Poland our slaughter-house, the East our wheatfields, the South-East our orchards, and Italy our little harvest helper, what more do we want except some real coffee or tea ? " the Germans asked. The butter ration was increased from three to four ounces ; an adult's meat ration was over a pound a week ; similarly with sugar and flour. The supply of eggs was increased. One hundred wagon-loads of fresh vegetables

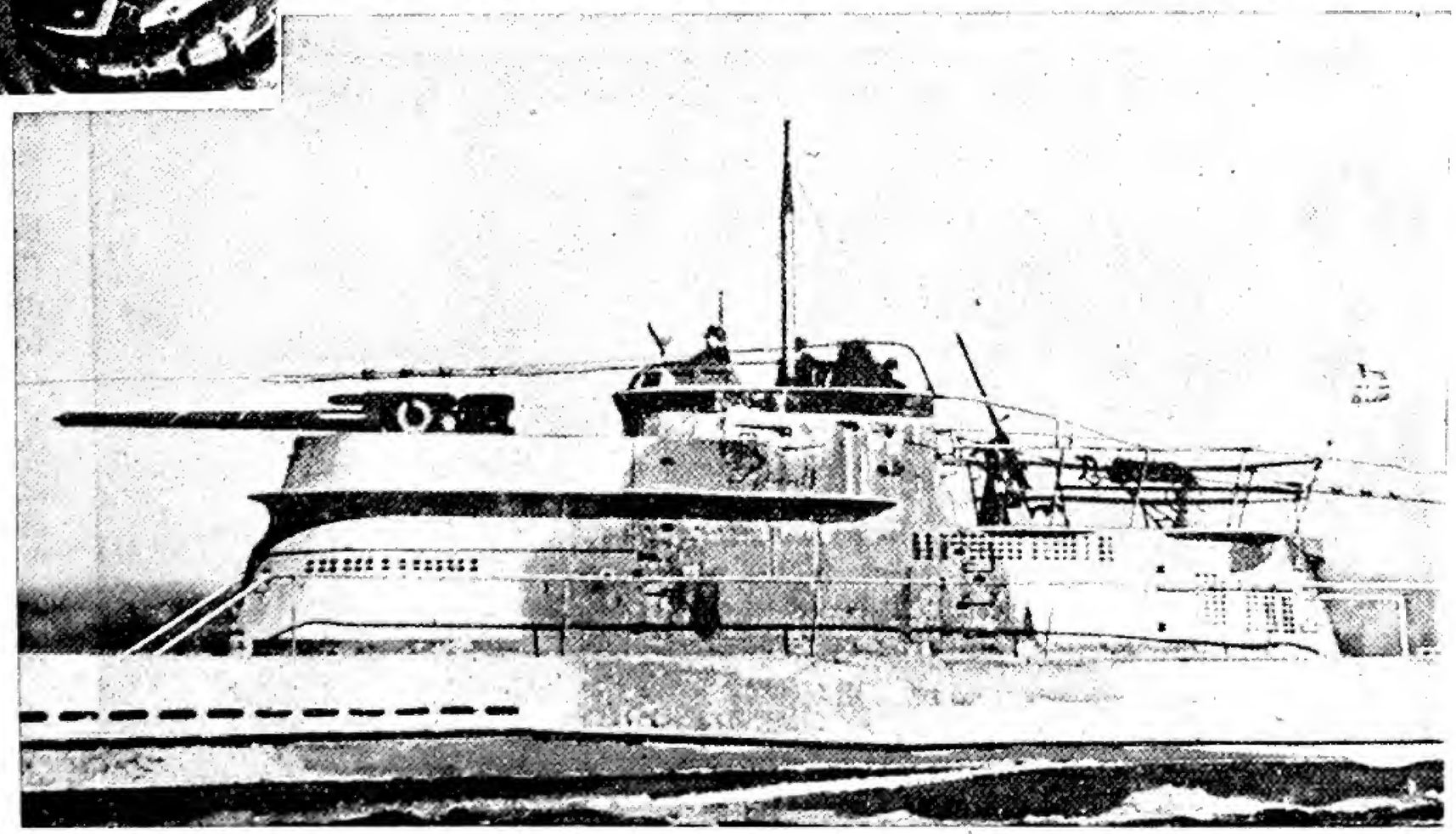




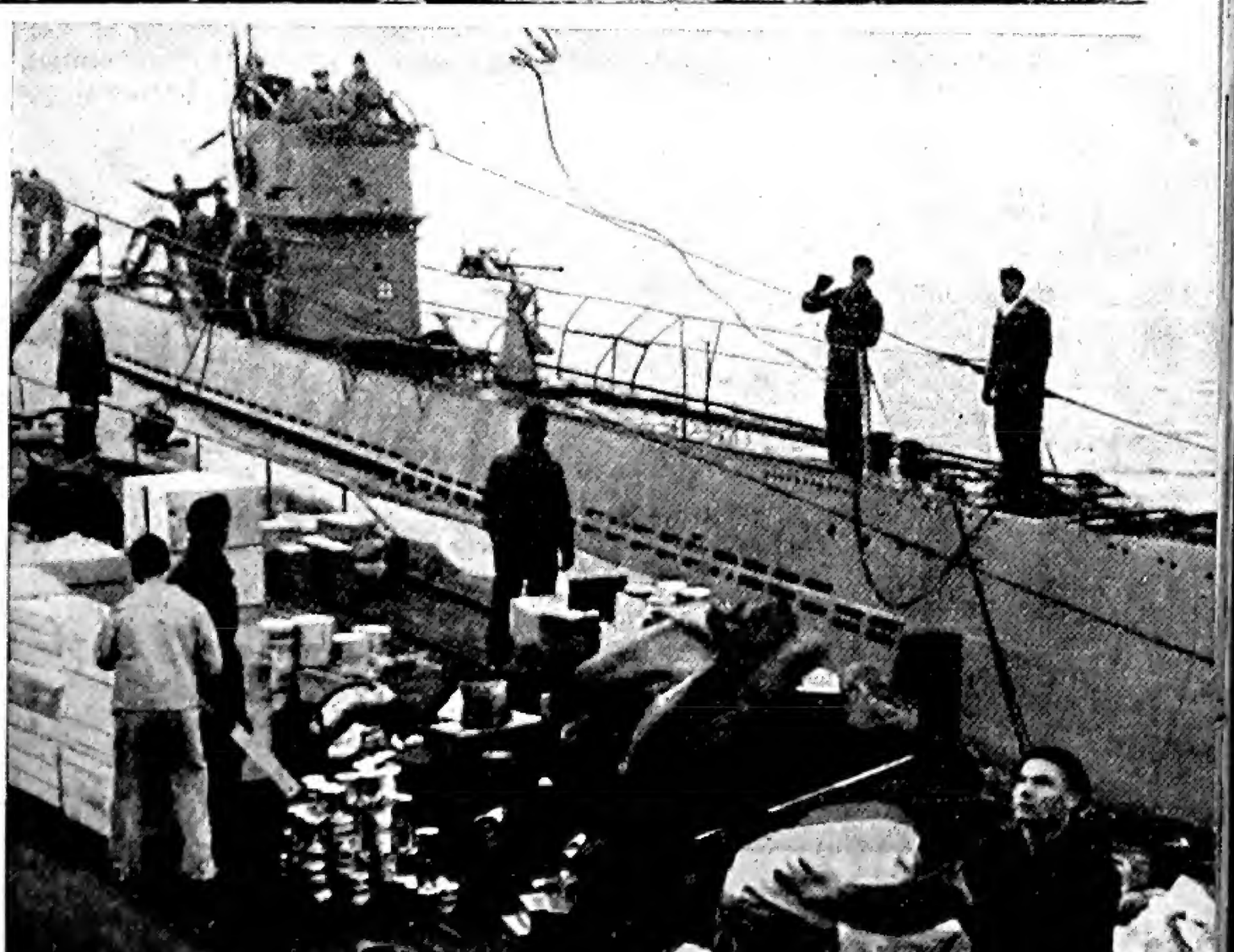
U-BOATS THAT WERE TO STARVE OUT BRITAIN

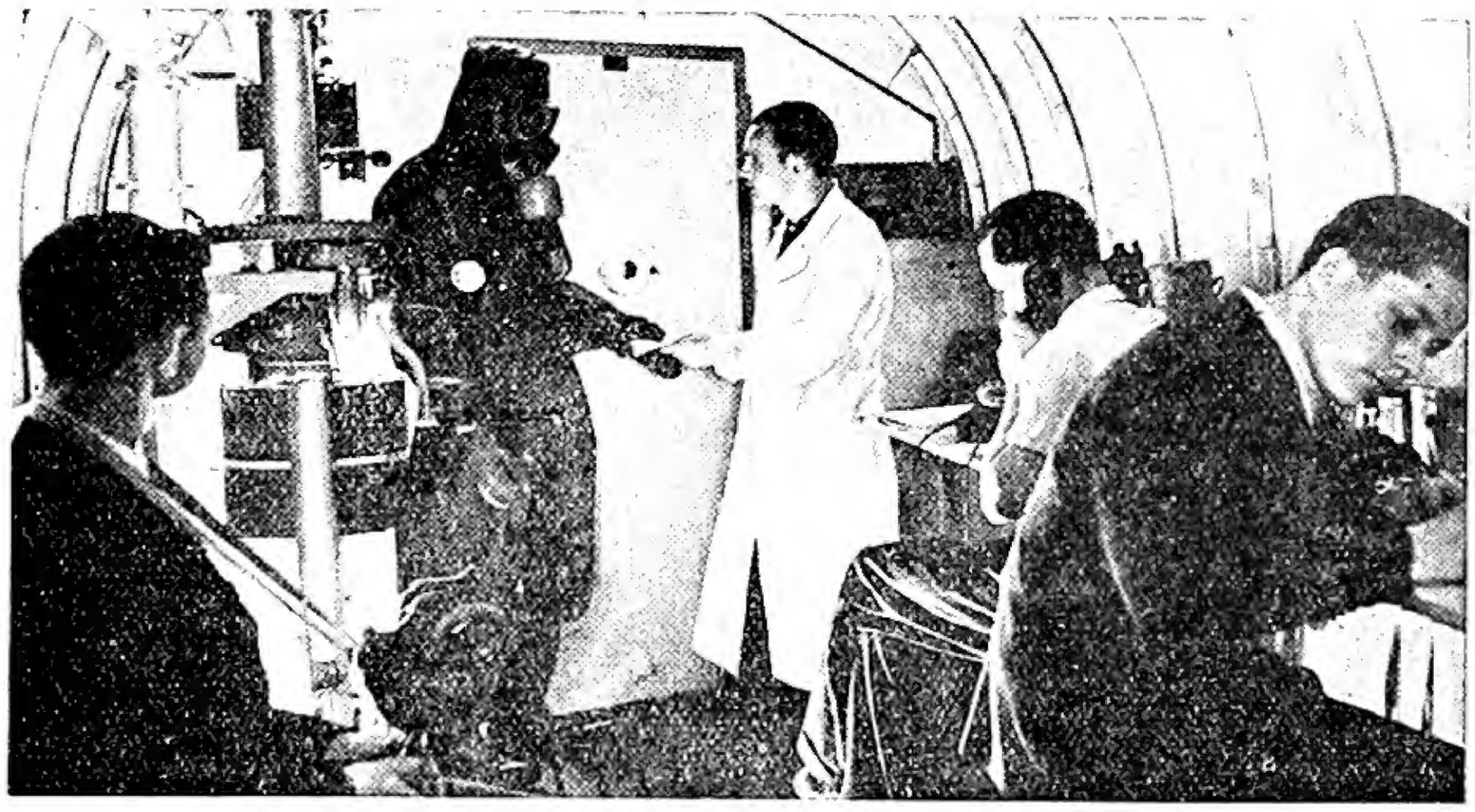
Above, a thousand-foot submarine under construction at a German shipyard; another U-boat just after leaving the slips at Stapel. Centre, a large and heavily gunned Nazi submarine returning to its base after a North Atlantic foray. Below, left, Capt Prien sets out from a German-occupied base in France. (It is claimed that Prien entered Scapa Flow on October 14, 1939, and sank the 'Royal Oak' [see p. 245]; in 1941 he was posted as missing.) On the right, taking on stores and provisions for an Atlantic voyage

Photos, E.N.A.; Planet News; Keystone, Associated Press



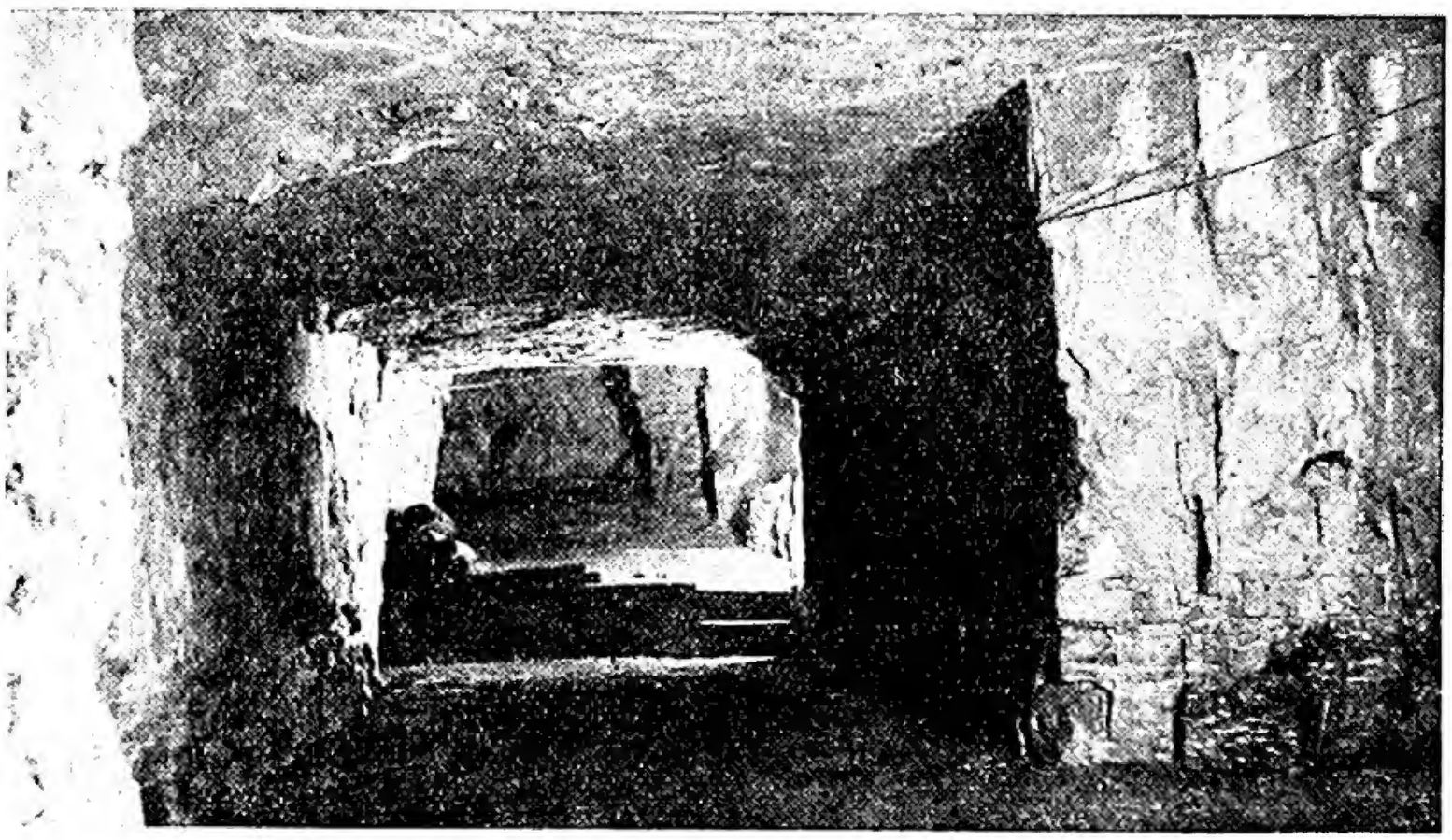






R.A.F. RAIDS CHECK THE NAZI WAR EFFORT

An air raid shelter at a German arms factory : a workman clad in anti-gas clothes is receiving a message. At the left is an air-filtering apparatus. Below, ancient tunnels at Osnabrück, used as shelters by the ironworkers during R.A.F. raids.



HAVOC WROUGHT IN BERLIN BY BRITISH BOMBS

The blazing ruins of the Central Criminal Court, in the Moabit quarter of Berlin. The Nazis made much of the alleged R.A.F. attack on what they termed 'cultural centres,' but actually any such damage was incidental to the bombing of military objectives, and was unavoidable.

Photos, E.N.A.

arrived daily from Holland, mostly for Ruhr workers harassed by the R.A.F. Snails, lobsters, frogs' legs, crabs, trout and caviar, pork and Wiener Schnitzels began again to grace restaurant tables. One million Danish pigs and 10,000 cattle were condemned to slaughter for lack of fodder, with consequent advantages to the German diet. The Germans began to see a return for their investment in armaments which had kept them deprived of ordinary amenities of life for so many years.

Expectations of an age of abundance and a speedy termination of hostilities rose to fever pitch when Goering launched his much-heralded air attacks on Britain. The German worker was regaled at breakfast and at supper with lurid stories of the bombing of London. He gained the impression that a pall of smoke hung over London's "vast bomb-devastated slums," while Nazi bombers swarmed like gnats over a swamp to add to the destruction. But when Britain not only held on grimly, but retaliated with increasing effect on German cities, Goebbels was in a dilemma. On the one hand, he sought to attribute the ability of Britain to carry on to the "sensual pleasure with which England approaches death"; on the other, he dealt with the difficulties and uselessness of invasion, with attendant loss of life, when Britain could "quite easily" be starved out.

Hopes of British Defeat

Germans found it especially puzzling to reconcile previous boasts that, "their frontiers guarded by the best army in

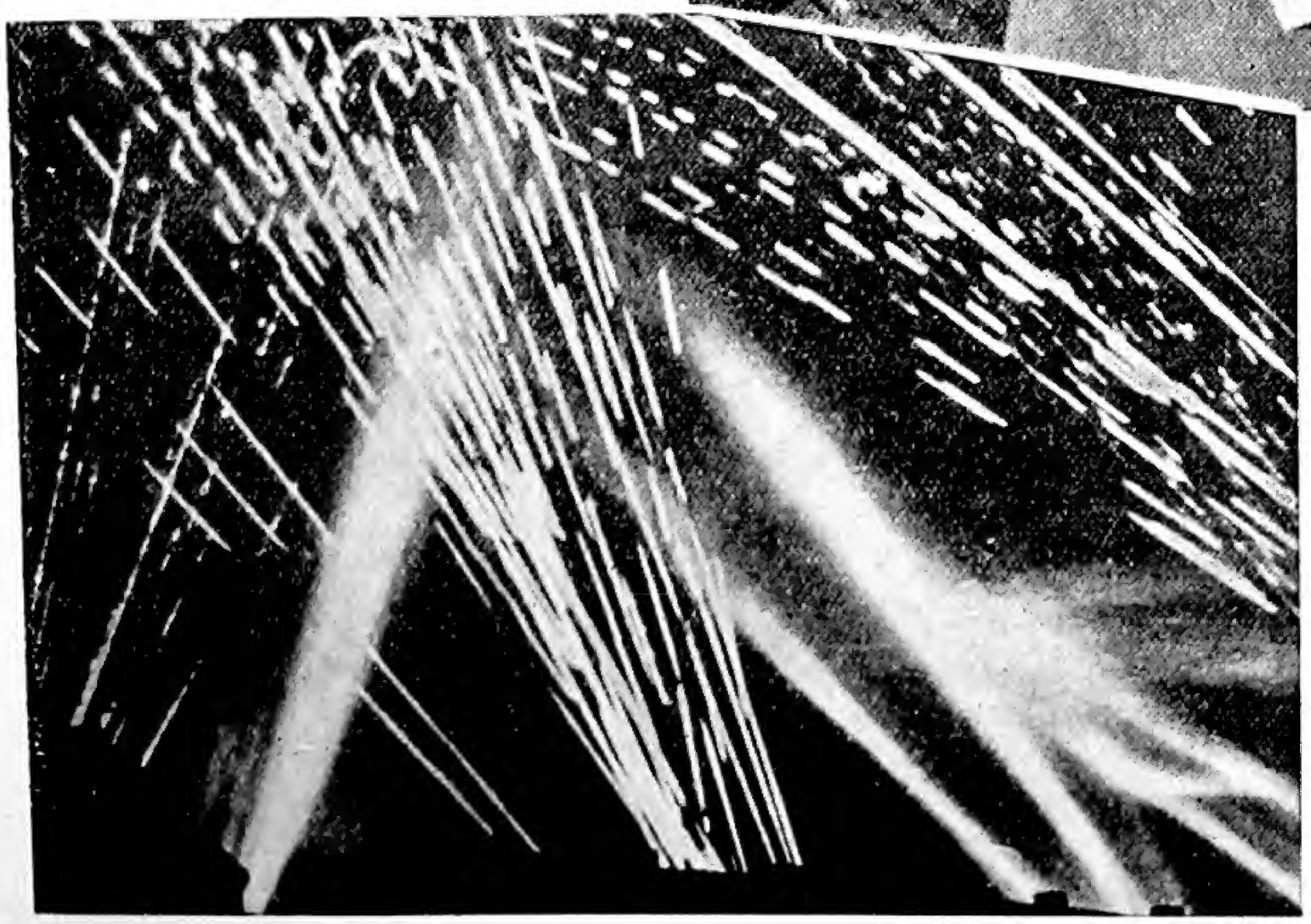
their history, and the air above protected by the most powerful air fleet, they could go in tranquillity about their business," with the fact that British bombers were busy in the hours of darkness over Berlin, Bremen, Kiel, Hamm, Hamburg, the Ruhr and other vital objectives. Fear of R.A.F. raids was tempered partly by admiration for the daring of British pilots, who defied long sea crossings, intense A.A. fire and the German night fighters to make sure of bombing their allotted targets. Howls of rage went up from German propaganda headquarters, and the direst threats were made against Britain. But the Germans in the towns were now becoming slightly cynical. The evacuation of train-loads of Berlin children (90,000 children were expected to leave Berlin and 42,000 children from Hamburg) showed them all too plainly the hollowness of Goering's boasts.

German Howls of Rage

The R.A.F. struck the first effective blow at Nazi prestige in the seven years since Hitler came to power. The viciousness of Nazi spokesmen, who called R.A.F. raiders "night gangsters" and their bombings "organized terrorism," bore evidence to their sensitiveness on this point.

Germans, young and old, never learned of their tremendous air losses in the Battle of Britain. The acute disappointment which would have been felt had the abandonment of immediate invasion plans been announced was offset by prophecies that Germany was waiting for the "September mists" to cross the Channel, and then for the November fogs.





GERMAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY

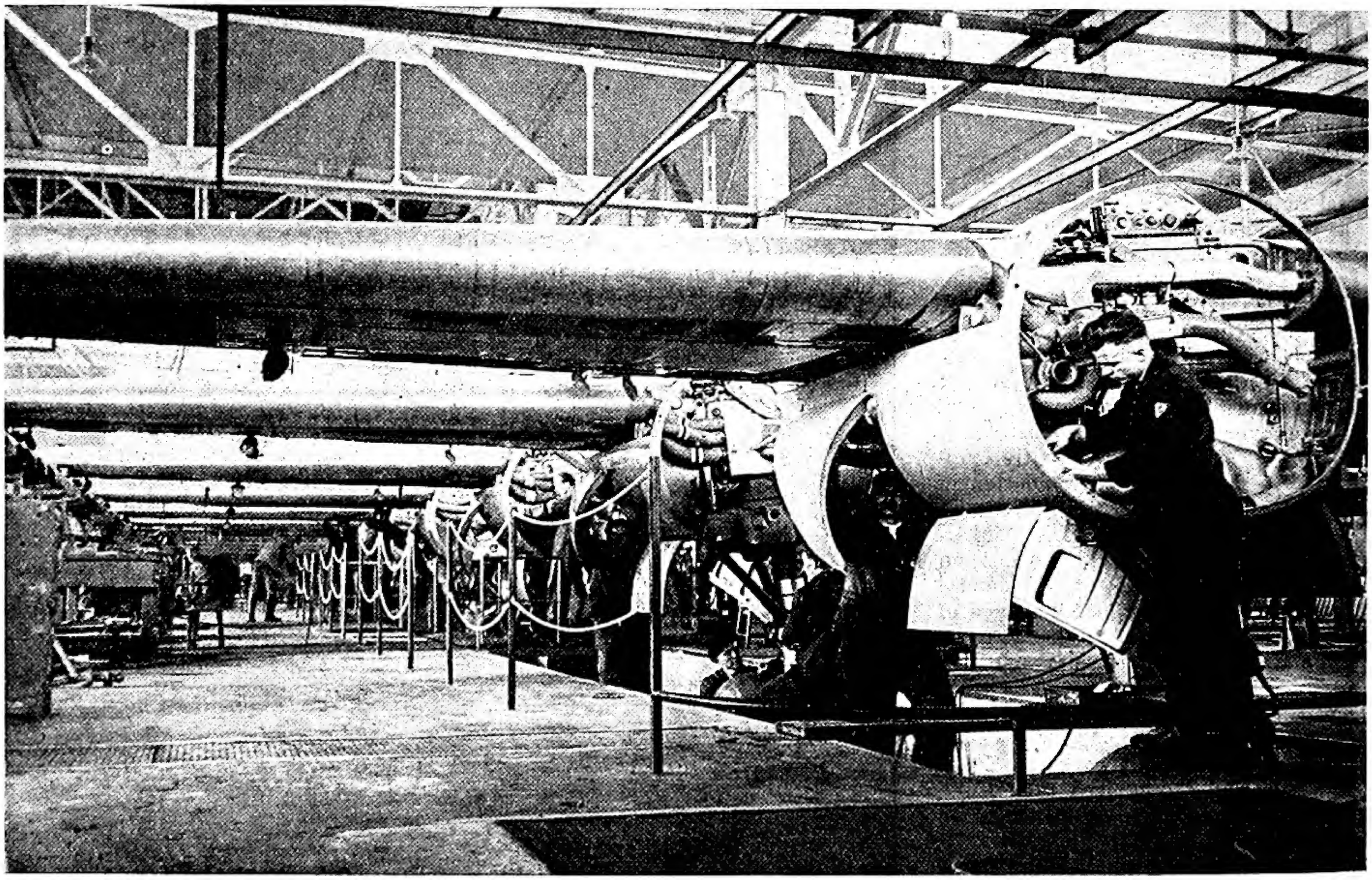
Nazi gun and searchlight batteries did their best to harass our bombers during the many raids by the R.A.F. in the autumn of 1940, but the British attack increased steadily in weight and effectiveness. Above, a Nazi A.A. gun said to be firing 'flaming onions' at raiders overhead; below, shell tracks and searchlight beams above a German city.

Photos, Keystone; Planet News

Meanwhile, wage increases were made gradually. A grim winter of continued warfare approached, and the German consoled himself with three factors:

1. It had been a year of glorious conquests.
2. Hitler had proved himself infallible and would certainly bring the war soon to a close.
3. If, as some pessimists said, Germany could not win, she could certainly not be beaten either on the field or by the blockade.

Reviewing the year's events, the German had no cause to complain of Hitler. The victories achieved had



JUNKERS 88 TWIN-ENGINED BOMBERS ON THE ASSEMBLY LINE
An interesting sidelight is thrown on German practice by this photograph : units consisting of the starboard wing and engine of the Junkers 88 are seen in an advanced stage of progress, with fitters at work on the engines. The Ju 88 was one of the chief heavy bombers of the period.
Photo, Associated Press

been as far as he knew comparatively bloodless. Germany was drawing £832,000,000 annually from countries she had overrun. Every Norwegian man, woman and child was paying slightly over a shilling a day towards the cost of keeping the German army of occupation. France was paying £1,660,000 daily ; Denmark, Holland and Belgium, £22,500,000, £30,000,000 and £45,000,000 a year respectively. Millions of Poles, Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Norwegians, Czechs and Belgians were slaves on German farms and in German factories, at wages approximating one-half of those earned by Germans.

Not that the British blockade was without effect ; but at least, thought the German Hausfrau in so far as she had retained the habit of thinking, Hitler seemed to have foreseen everything. Wooden-soled sandals solved the problem of shortage of leather. If eggs were hard at times to get, there was a State egg substitute called " Milei," made from skimmed milk and chemicals. She could strengthen her soups and



GOERING AND MESSERSCHMITT
The most successful of the Nazi fighter 'planes was the Me 110, designed by Dr. Willy Messerschmitt, seen above (right) with Field-Marshal Goering. A modification of this machine was turned out as a fighter-bomber.
Photo, Sport & General

meat dishes with a powder known as " Migetti," made from skimmed milk, potato meal and other ingredients, which could be used as a substitute for flour, rice and eggs. Powdered cocoa-bean husks made a not very popular substitute for pepper, but there were vitamin tablets with a lemon flavour to replace vegetable vitamins for the children. Then there were " D.P.M." (" Deutsches pudding meal "), synthetic salad dressings, and other Ersatz foods which, while not as good as the real thing, would at least carry her over until Hitler ended the war in 1941.

But no one knew better than Hitler the sensitiveness of the German to depression. The longed-for peace had not arrived when the winter of 1940–41 descended on Germany.

Reactions to R.A.F. Raids

On the contrary, the R.A.F. raids had divorced the German from some of his most cherished pleasures—the evenings in a café or restaurant. Now, for fear of R.A.F. raids, the restaurants and cafés were deserted at nightfall. Cigarettes were sold at the rate of one packet per customer per day. Millions of homes had been split up as a result of the British bombing raids and the maintenance of large forces in occupied countries.

The large-scale transfer of German industries to Prussia and Eastern Poland was one of the most spectacular effects of R.A.F. bombing. Millions of children were separated from their parents, and many a German mother living in Czechoslovakia or Eastern Poland for safety from our nocturnal visits experienced the pangs of home-sickness and the hate of the subjugated peoples in whose country she was quartered. Added to this came many depressing letters from German husbands and sweethearts in Holland, France, Norway and other countries. They told of the hatred with which they were regarded there, and inquired anxiously as to the fate of relatives in the bombed cities of Germany.

War Industries Move Eastward

Thereupon Goebbels launched a new propaganda campaign, the main theme of which was "Germany cannot afford to lose." He hinted at the terrible reprisals which the Germans could expect from the people of occupied countries in the event of defeat. "We are not loved; let us face the fact," the German Press urged. With uneasy conscience the German worker responded to the call to increase production of U-boats, 'planes and tanks to avert the Nemesis which would otherwise overtake him. The spirit of solidarity was thus adroitly reinforced by Goebbels, and evidence of its effect was that Germans contributed nearly the same amount as in the previous autumn to the Winter Help Campaign. "We lost the last war and starved for 20 years. What will happen to us if we lose this one?" they asked.

But while the maintenance of German morale was necessary to increased production efforts by the jaded workers, it was not essential for the continuance of the war. The workers had long ago lost any initiative they possessed, and even their most private activities were so expertly watched and reported by the Gestapo that the growth of any concerted discontent and its transformation into a revolt against the Hitler regime, even had the will for this existed, was a remote possibility.

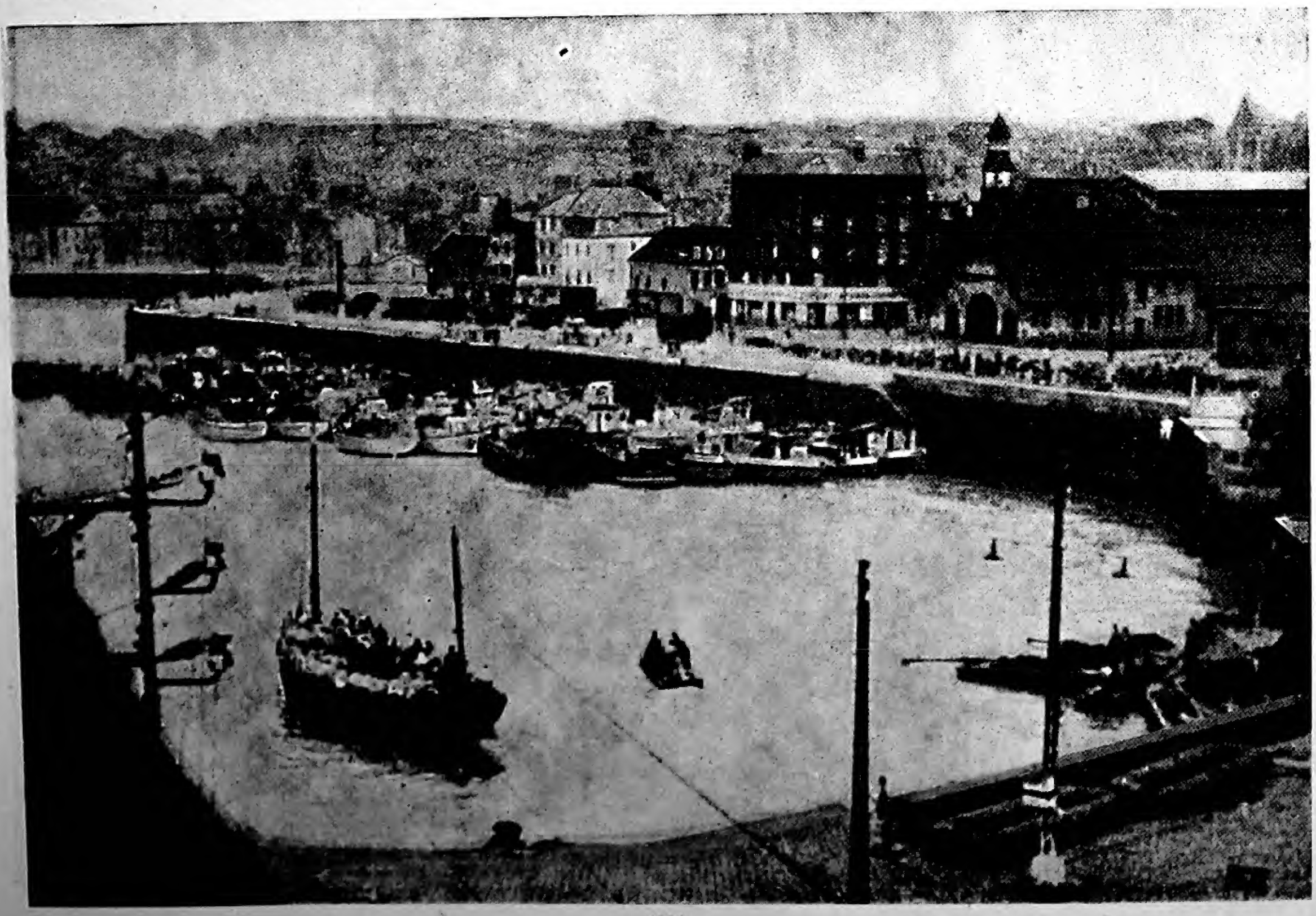
Meanwhile, financial statistics (for what they are worth in a Totalitarian State run on feudal lines with exploitation of subject peoples as a mainstay) exhibited increasing evidence of inflation. The Reichsbank statement for December, 1940, showed a new record for credit granted and banknote circulation. The note circulation, amounting to 14,000,000,000 reichsmarks (roughly £1,166,000,000), was the highest since the bitter inflation years. The total disclosed indebtedness of the Third Reich at the end of February, 1941, was 86·56 milliard marks, compared with 11·7 milliards at the end of March, 1933. Hitler had thus multiplied German debts by nearly 7½ since he came to power, and this figure takes no account of undisclosed indebtedness.

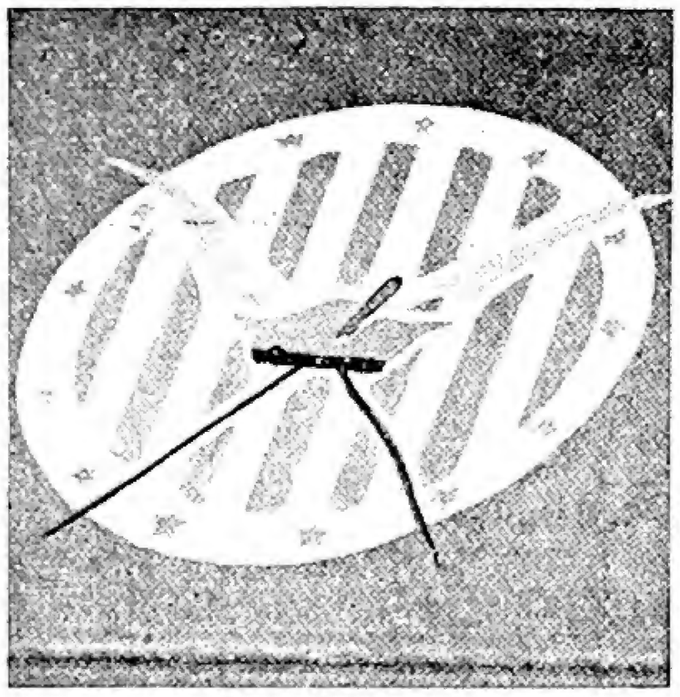
But of this state of virtual bankruptcy the average German knew nothing. Hitler's hold on the Nazi imagination was such that Germans were ready to bear far greater trials, with the possible exception of continued and heavy night bombing raids, before thinking of defeat.

WHERE TROOPS WERE MARSHALLED FOR INVADING BRITAIN

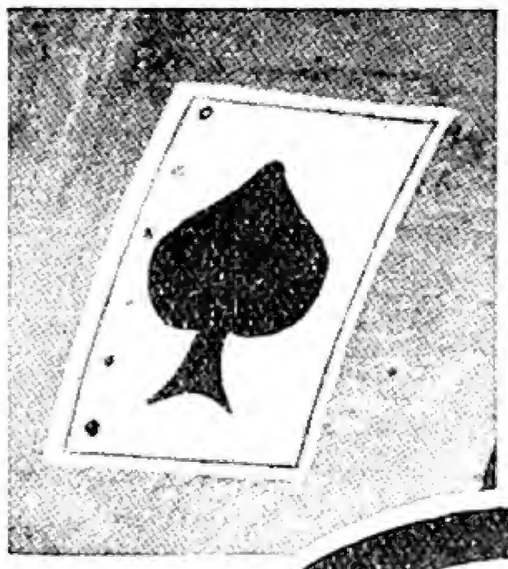
In September, 1940, the Germans prepared to invade Britain, but as fast as their troop-carrying craft were assembled the R.A.F. battered them to pieces, and eventually the invasion was called off. Here is a photograph taken at Dieppe surreptitiously about that date and smuggled out of the country. It shows an embarkation exercise: one boat laden with Nazi soldiers in full kit is under way, and many others are in the background.

Photo, Associated Press

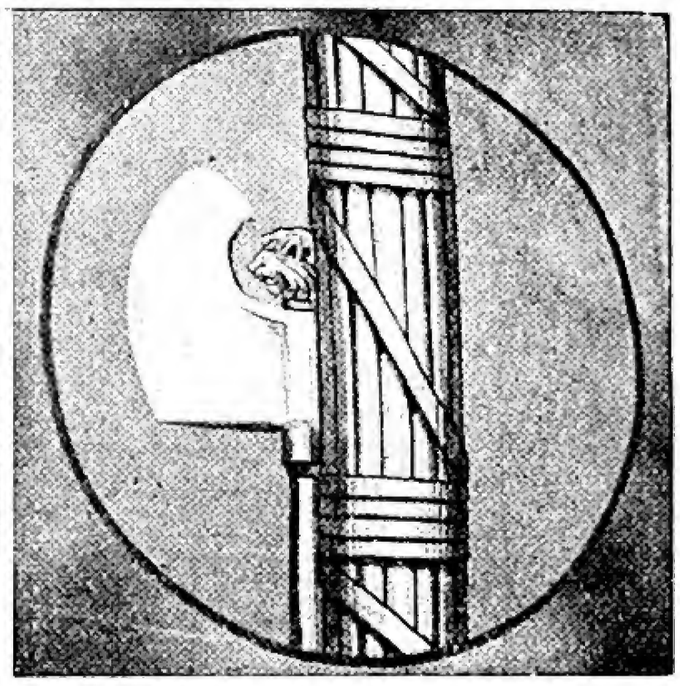




Badge of a Polish Fighter Squadron operating with the R.A.F. Right, Ace of Spades sign on a Dornier 17



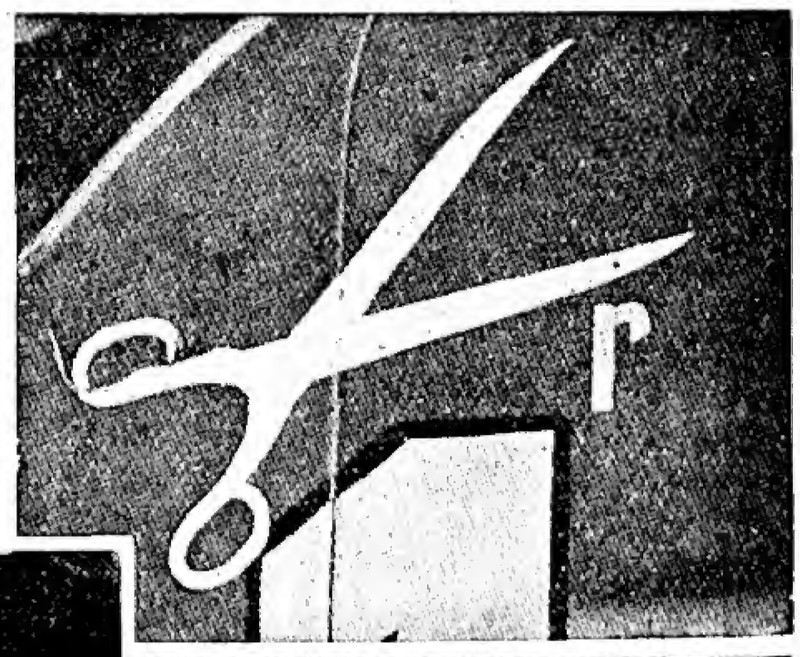


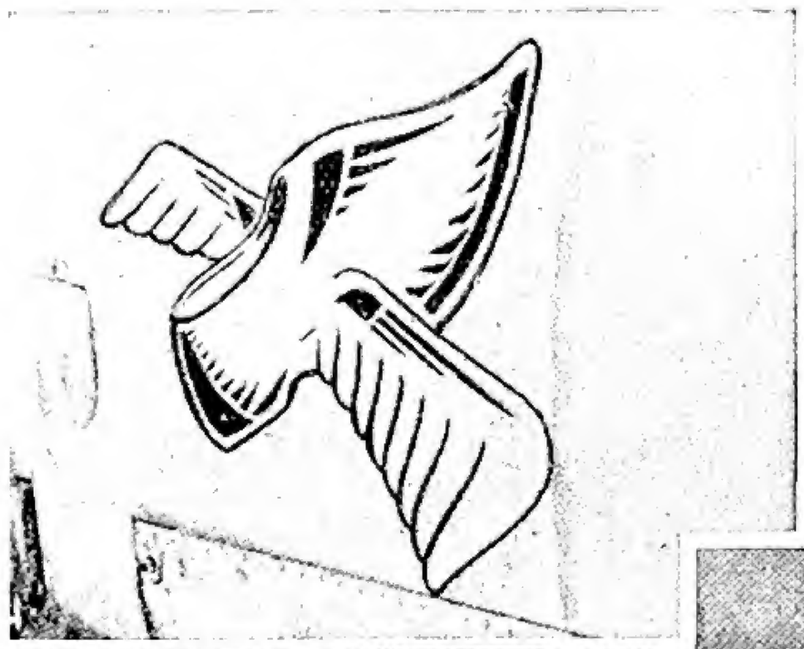


Fasces symbols on Italian machines. An inscription in Venetian dialect on the left-hand reads "Look out!"

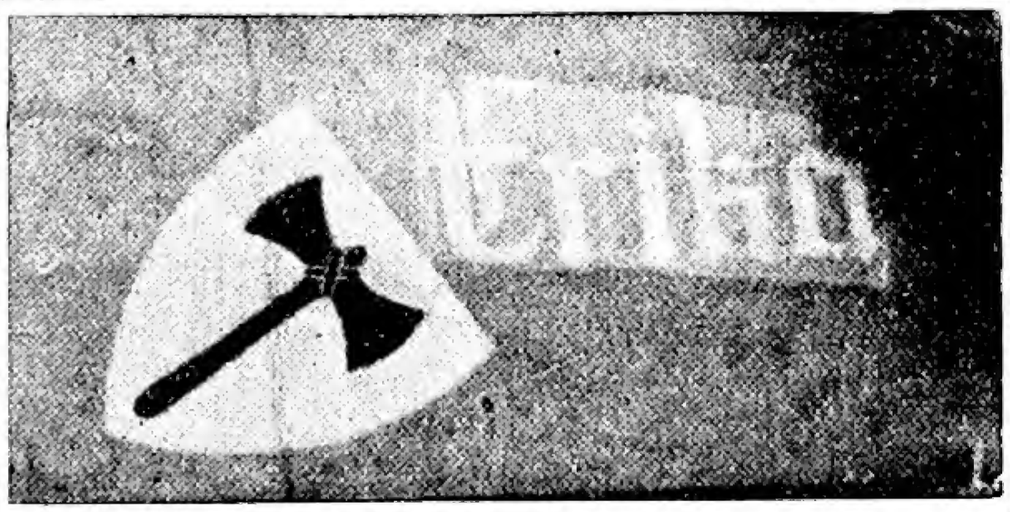


Well-designed African motif on a yellow-nosed Messerschmitt, in use over six months before the German Africa Corps landed in Libya.







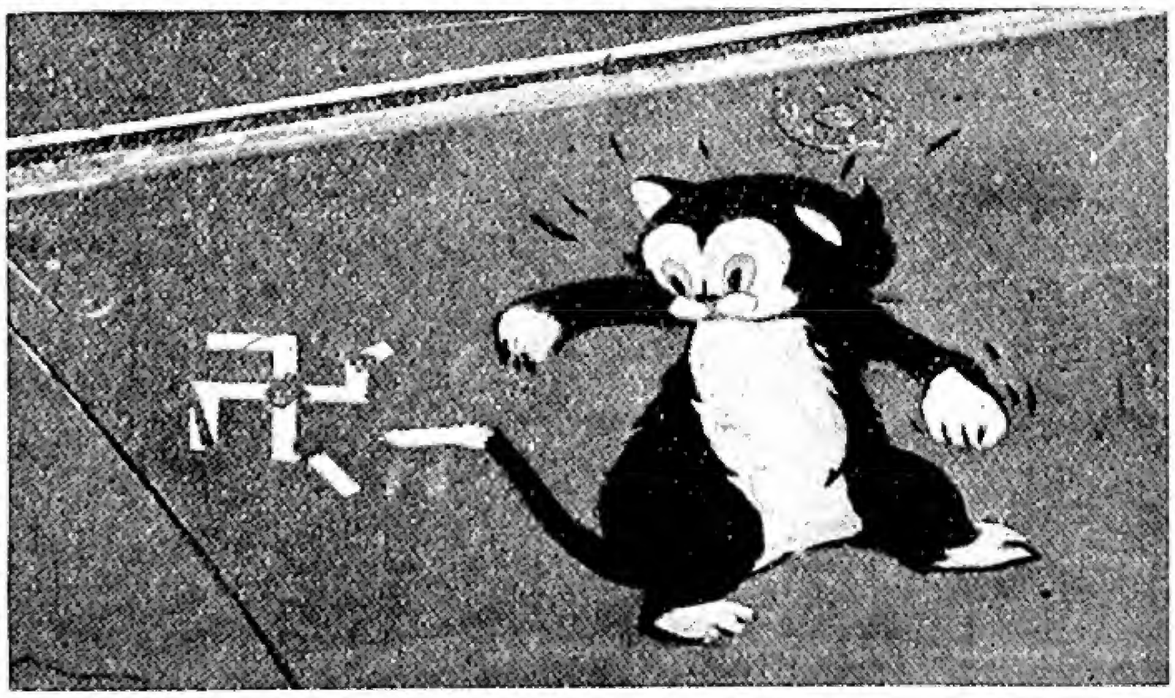


AIR EMBLEMS OF FRIEND AND FOE

This group of pictorial devices painted on British, Polish, German and Italian fighters and bombers amplifies those already given in pages 936 and 1155. A noteworthy point here is the predominance of humour in the British examples, as those shown immediately to the left and right. Above left, centre, and right are German insignia taken from Messerschmitt fighters shot down in Britain during the closing months of 1940.









Left, badge of No. 601 (City of London) Fighter Squadron of the Auxiliary Air Force. Above and right, characters from Walt Disney's film 'Pinocchio' on a Hurricane fighter and a Wellington bomber.

Chapter 127

THE AERIAL OFFENSIVE AGAINST GERMANY AND ITALY: LAST FIVE MONTHS OF 1940

Onslaught Against German War Machine—Smashing the Nazi Oil Refineries —Bombing of Aircraft Works—How the Ruhr was Ceaselessly Battered— Attacks on the German Capital—Invasion Ports in Occupied Territory—Long-range Bombing Attacks on Italy—The Raid on Taranto

THOUGH Germany initiated the idea of totalitarian war the Royal Air Force were quick to realize to the full all its implications. To hamper and destroy the enemy's war factories is not only a sound method of attack; it is the best means of defending Britain. During the first year of hostilities our aviators had gained much experience of night-flying over Germany, and this was to prove of increasing advantage as the months passed. They knew their way about, and had acquired a navigational victory over the midnight air. They collected information about military objectives, and when they began to bomb they worked to a concise plan.

In his review of the progress of the war on August 20, 1940, Mr. Churchill said:

"We are able to verify the results of bombing military targets in Germany not only by reports which reach us through many sources but also by photography. I have no hesitation in saying that this progress of bombing the military industries and communications of Germany, and the air bases and storage depots, from which we are attacked, which will continue upon an ever-increasing scale until the end of the war and may in another year attain dimensions hitherto undreamed of, assures one of the surest, if not the shortest, of all roads to victory."



HOW SERGEANT HANNAH WON THE V.C.

A British bomber that successfully attacked enemy barge concentrations at Antwerp on the night of September 15, 1940, was set on fire by an enemy shell which burst inside. The navigator baled out, but the wireless operator/air gunner, Sergeant John Hannah, fought the flames for ten minutes and extinguished the fire. Badly burned, almost blinded, Hannah had to turn on his oxygen supply. His 'courage, coolness and devotion to duty enabled the pilot to bring the aircraft safely to its base.' He was only 18 years of age.

Photo, Keystone

All Germany had therefore been examined in relation to its industrial activities, and few places, however small or large, were immune from the attentions of our bombers.

What food is to the soldier oil is to the machine. The mechanization of war has made oil the prime essential, and without a superabundance of this commodity the whole apparatus of aggression must come to a standstill. Long before the war began the Nazis, in view of the blockade, laid in vast stocks, but also exerted every effort to increase them from their own plants. Germany produces about a million tons of crude oil annually from her own wells, and refines it in plants mostly situated in the Hamburg, Bremen, Hanover and Rhineland areas. Of her total output of 3½ million tons of synthetic oil per annum, 2½ million tons are derived from synthetic-oil plants proper and the rest is made up of by-products. To do all in our power to disintegrate this industry was the obvious imperative.

The details of R.A.F. attacks in this direction are of paramount interest as showing the thoroughness with which Bomber Command concentrated from the first on the German war machine as a whole. In the five months from the beginning of August to the end of December, 1940, there were 177 attacks on oil plants, synthetic refineries, storage tanks and oil-receiving depots, ranging from Emmerich on the Dutch frontier to the new plant at Pölitz (Stettin) at the mouth of the Oder on the Baltic. Many of the heaviest and most persistent attacks were delivered on the famous works at Gelsenkirchen in the Ruhr. Similarly, the great Leuna factories near Leipzig came in for bombing attention, and on ten occasions high explosives wrought havoc there. A few miles north of Leipzig are the powerful plants of Magdeburg, and between August 22 and November 1, 1940, they felt the weight of our bombs on thirteen occasions. At Hanover the well-known Gewerkschaft Erdöl refineries and other departments connected with the oil industry suffered a dozen bombardments.

According to a statement by the Air Ministry News Service issued on November 19 the biggest oil refinery in Hanover had been utterly ruined, and the Deutsche Vacuum company's factory at Bremen was out of production. It was also learned that the Neuhof (Hamburg) refineries had been compelled to close down; and oil works at Wesseling, Bohlen and other places were also "pinpointed" by the R.A.F.

Next in importance to oil in the totalitarian scheme of war is the aeroplane which consumes it in such vast quantities. The ramifications of the aircraft industry are many and various, and to destroy any section is to slow up and disorganize the whole. Engines, airscrews, electrical equipment, frames, instruments, parks, repair-depots, hangars, are all components. The R.A.F. have made many visits to centres of the German aircraft industry near and far, and have bombed them by day and by night.

No doubt Hitler thought that the Messerschmitt works at Augsburg, near Munich in Bavaria, and the Dornier factories at Wismar on the Baltic coast, and even Junkers at Dessau were somewhat out of range of British bombs; but the fact remains that Augsburg was heavily bombed on August 17 and 28, 1940, and Wismar in August, September and October, 1940, the latter place so





VICTOR AND VANQUISHED DIED TOGETHER

On November 28, 1940, Flight-Lieutenant John Charles Dundas, engaging one of three Me 109s that flashed by in close formation above the Isle of Wight, shot down the enemy. In the moment of reporting to his Squadron Commander, Dundas was himself shot down by another Messerschmitt, but he had achieved a fine victory, since his first opponent had been Major Helmuth Wieck (right), Germany's greatest fighter ace, said to have scored 56 successes in aerial combat. Flight-Lieutenant Dundas won the D.F.C. and Bar. *Photos, British Official; E.N.A.*

violently as to have been almost destroyed.

The B.M.W. aero-engine works at Munich and Berlin, and the Focke-Wulf and other aircraft factories at Bremen were hit in September, November and December respectively. For over an hour on the night of August 13/14, 1940, the Junkers factory at Dessau was subjected to a severe punishment. Although high clouds obscured the moon, parachute flares were dropped and one bomber, coming down to within a hundred feet, made a direct hit on the experimental shop. On the same occasion the subsidiary Junkers factory at Bernburg, where airframes for dive-bombers and troop transports are made, was seriously damaged.

As for distances, however far, the Royal Air Force had already mastered them, and a visit to the Skoda works in Czechoslovakia, about 750 miles from our bases, was easily accomplished.

We had seen how the enemy's destruction of aerodromes at the beginning of the war had greatly assisted his victories. It was our turn to bomb German aerodromes, and there were 108 separate attacks on aerodromes, air bases and seaplane bases—ranging from Borkum near Wilhelmshaven in the north-west to Freiburg in the south-west, and to Warnemünde on the Baltic in the north-east.

Then there was the Ruhr zone. Extending from Münster in the north to Cologne in the south, and from Crefeld in the west to Hamm in the east, the Ruhr is, or was, at least until our intensive onslaughts, the most highly concentrated industrial department of Germany, comprising a vast network of interdependent war factories, docks, stores, railways and canals vitally concerned in keeping the Nazi juggernaut going at full speed.

Vitals of the Ruhr

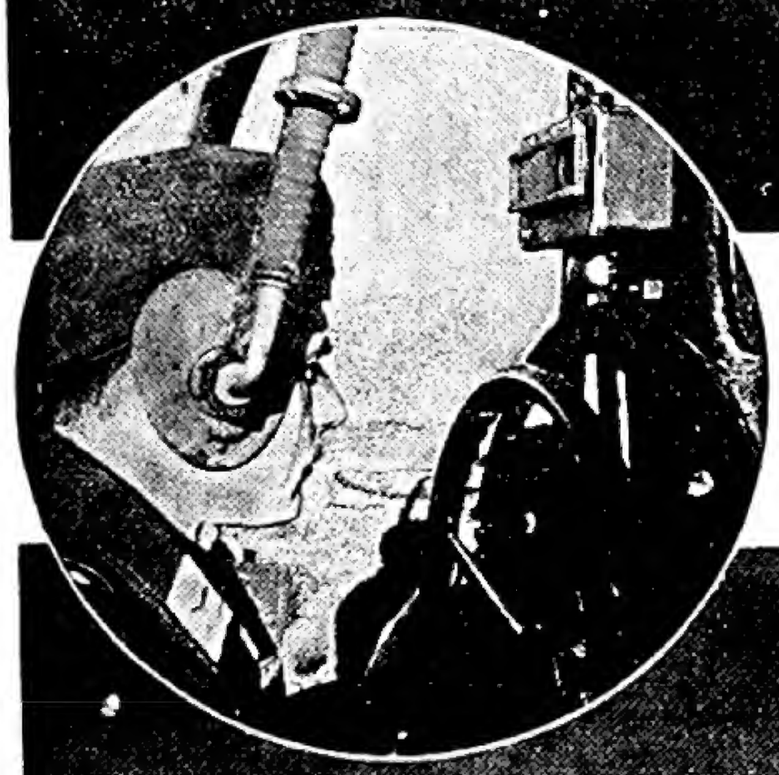
Essen is the headquarters of the Krupp armaments works. Between August and December, 1940, the R.A.F. dropped bombs on Krupps seventeen times. On November 19 it was officially stated that production at Krupps was down by 50 per cent; many departments were closed, and others had to be transferred to areas less accessible to our bombers.

"The R.A.F. were over Cologne" is a familiar detail of the news. We take it for granted. But when we realize that in twenty weeks Bomber Command had called on this hive of Rhineland wartime industry at least 37 times, we can imagine what this meant to blast-furnaces, railway sidings, power stations, goods yards, bridges, junctions,



AFTER A BOMBING RAID BY THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

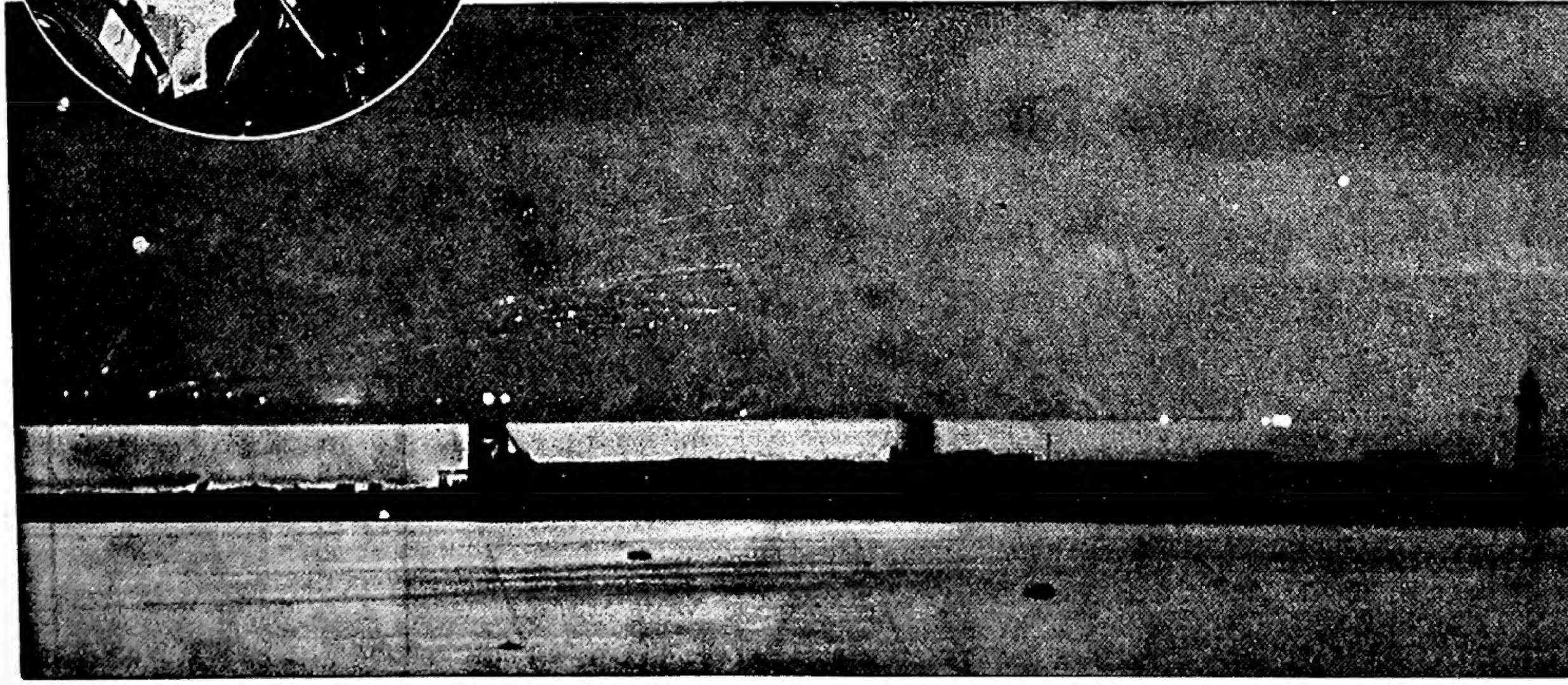
By frequent attacks, driven home with great daring, Bomber Command aircraft wrecked German airfields and hangars and made more difficult the task of the enemy raiders. This photograph from German sources shows repairs being carried out to a building and the runway on the morrow of an R.A.F. raid. *Photo, Keystone*



CHANNEL PORTS BECAME A FURNACE OF DEATH & DESTRUCTION

Forestalling Hitler's invasion projects, German-occupied ports across the Channel were battered by night and day The two larger photos, taken by long-range cameras from the British coast, show the glare of fires started by R.A.F bombs and the stabbing beams of enemy searchlights. Below, streams of 'flaming onion' shells plunge upwards into the sky. In circle, a German soldier at the earpieces of a sound locator, listening for approaching R.A.F. planes.

Photos, "Daily Mirror"; Associated Press; Planet News



oil plants, electric power plants, canals, wharves, and, in fact, to communications generally.

The German railway system, none too efficient before the war, has been very seriously damaged by our bombers, particularly the junctions at Hamm, Soest, Schwerte, Osnabrück and Crefeld —all in the Ruhr. Following many previous attacks on marshalling yards, goods yards and sidings the R.A.F., made visits nearly every night to those centres, and sometimes two visits during the 24-hour period. Our bombers, therefore, were able to interrupt the pulse of transport by striking at the heart of German railways.

As a result, munitions to all parts of the country were delayed. It was impossible to keep trains running to time, or to replace the many wagons destroyed. Certain classes of transport, such as the delivery of coal to Denmark, were for a time completely cut off. Coal for Italy, instead of going the near and direct way, had to be sent circuitously from Silesia and Saxony via Vienna, causing much loss of time and further congestion of German railway traffic in the east. By November 7 there was such chaos on the German railways that a traveller from Basle to Hamburg had to change 52 times.

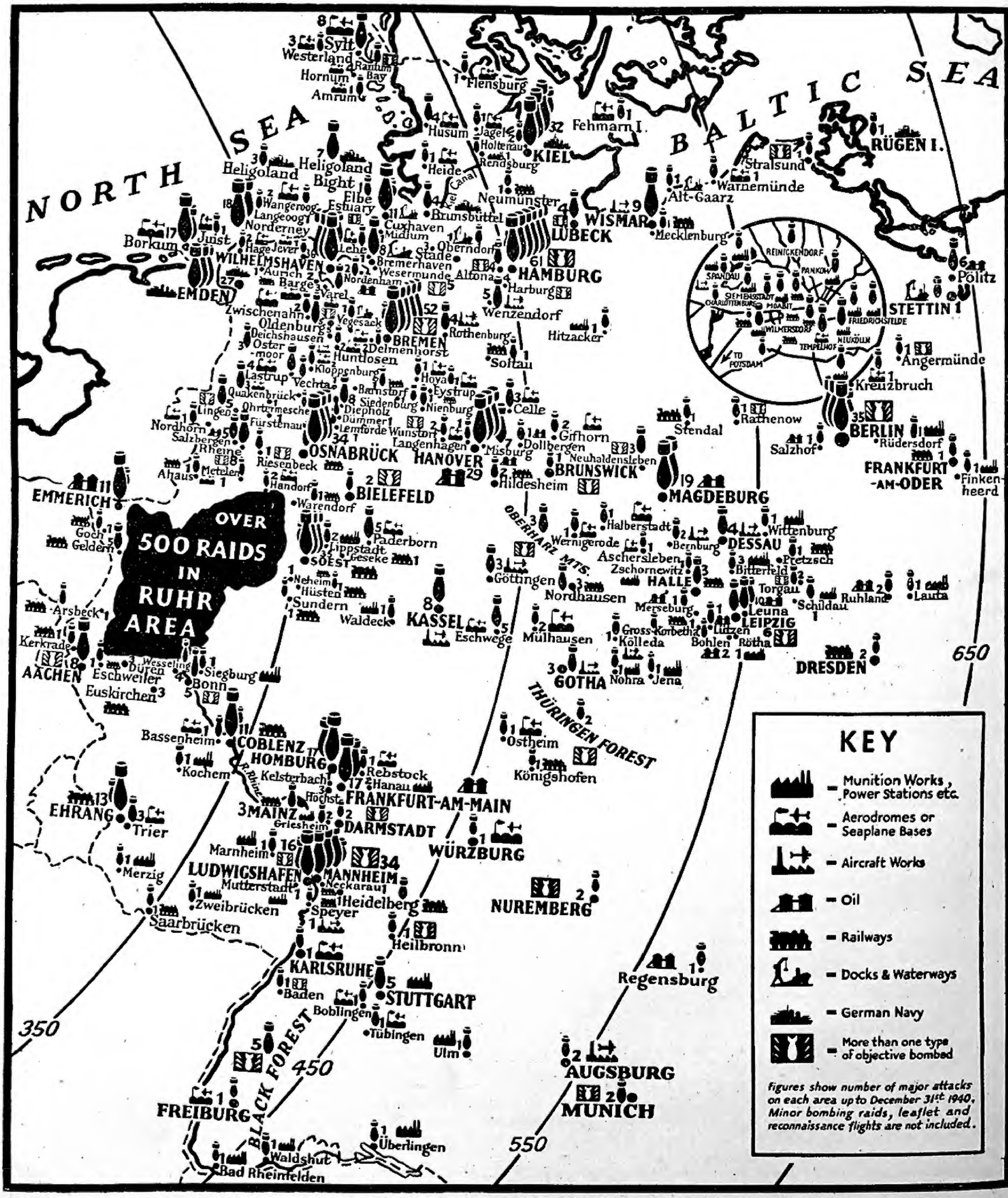
The battering which the Ruhr received was a considerable victory in itself, a victory that must have given the Nazis much anxiety.

Not the least futile of Goering's many boasts was the one he made on August 9, 1939, in which he said:

"As Reichsminister for Air, I have convinced myself personally of the measures taken to protect the Ruhr against air attack. In future I will look after every battery, for we will not expose the Ruhr to a single bomb dropped by enemy aircraft."

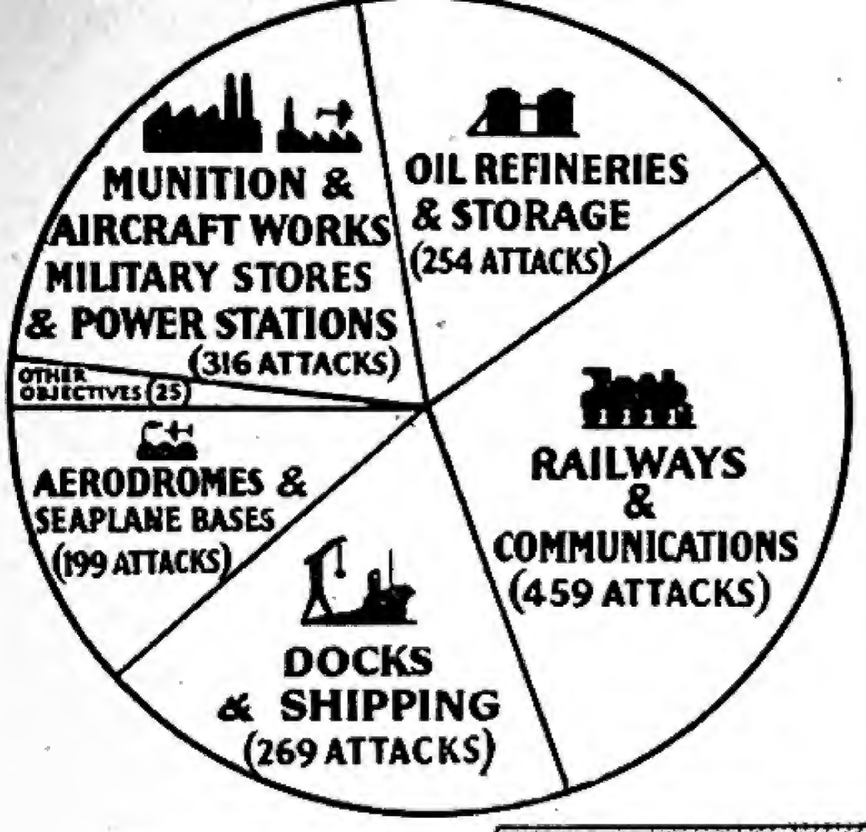
The workers of Berlin, like those of the Ruhr, must have wondered what had gone wrong with Germany's anti-aircraft defences, for Berlin also was told by Goering that it would be absolutely safe from British bombers.

On August 26-27 the air-raid sirens sounded in the Nazi capital when A.A. batteries and searchlight concentrations on the outskirts of the city were attacked. Thenceforth the raids



WHERE R.A.F. BOMBS FELL IN THE AUTUMN AND WINTER OF 1940

By the end of 1940 the Ruhr district had been bombed more than 500 times; in the five months ending December 177 major attacks were made on oil plants, refineries and storage depots; details of other objectives are given in this map, issued by the Ministry of Information. Distances from London are shown by the arcs of circles.



increased with deadly efficiency and regularity.

Useless for German news bulletins to pretend that the R.A.F. hit only residential and cultural districts; our bombers had orders to attack military objectives, and none of our raids was in any sense of the word a reprisal for the cruel and wanton unmilitary damage that the Nazis had done to London and provincial cities. By the end of December, 1940, Berlin had been bombed 35 times, and the record of destruction included power stations, gasworks, aircraft factories, the Potsdamer, Lehrter, Anhalter and Tiergarten stations, Tempelhof aerodrome, Brandenburg motor-works, a transformer station at Friedrichfelde, Siemens and Halske factories, goods yards, railways and electrical works. Charlottenburg, Moabit, Neukölln and Potsdam discovered that the R.A.F. were not only ubiquitous but had an uncanny markmanship with bombs. In addition to all these inland operations, naval docks and the German navy itself frequently suffered from the hit direct.

This brief survey shows how our airmen carried the war into Germany between August and December, 1940, but when we remember that this important offensive continued simultaneously with the Battle of Britain, and with far fewer aeroplanes than the enemy possessed, the magnificent work of our Bomber Command is obvious.

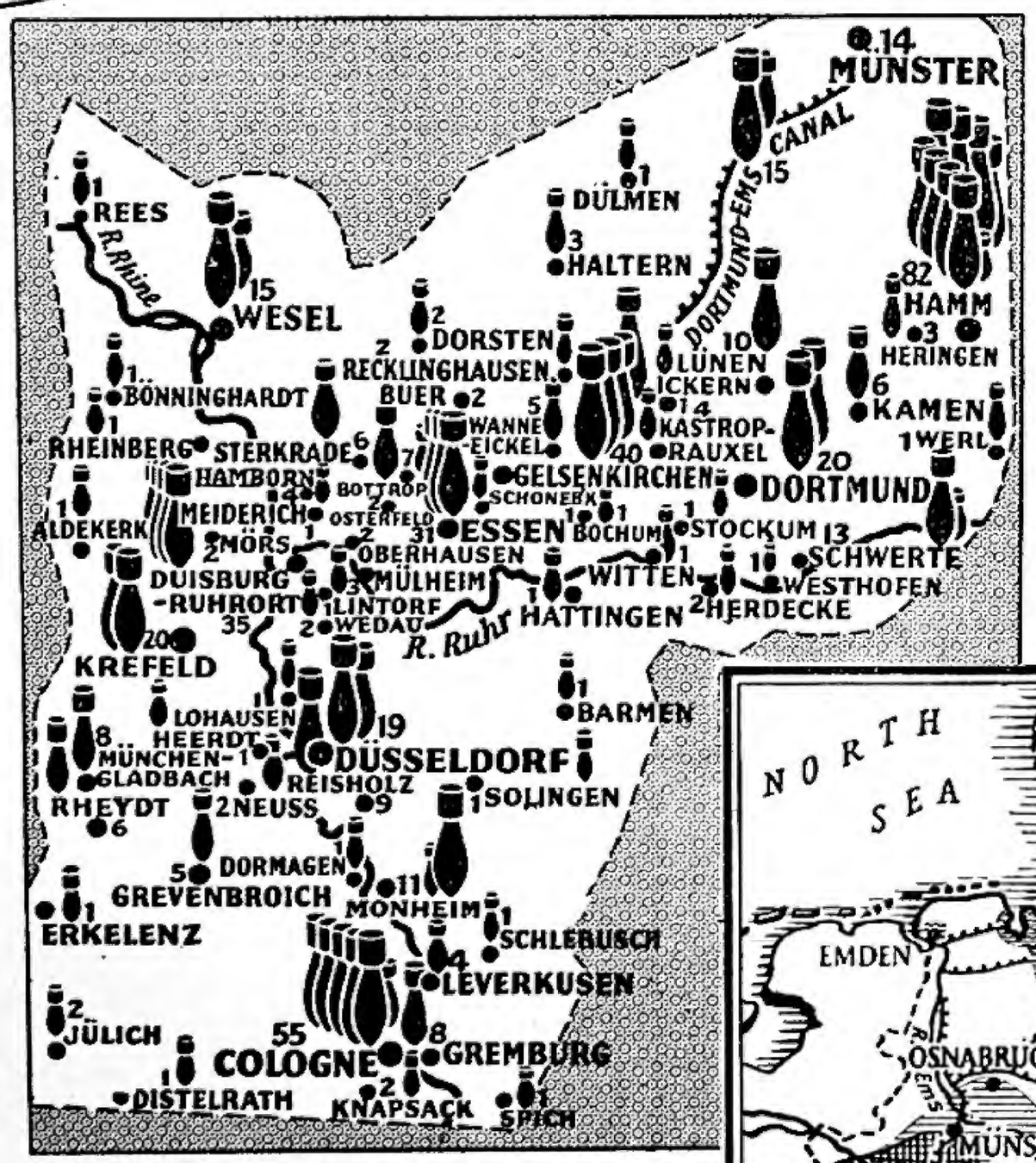
While dealing with Germany herself we had to defend Britain and attack German-occupied territory.

Looking back on those critical weeks when the fate of Britain hung in the balance, we see how rapidly we had learned the lesson of the bomber's part in modern warfare. The Germans had shown what it could do as an advance agent of destruction. Britain applied that lesson rigorously in occupied territories. Thus we find the Royal Air Force constantly at work over Nazi airfields in Holland, Belgium and France as the surest method of forestalling an invasion of Britain. On August 1 there were daylight raids on Dutch aerodromes at Leeuwarden and Hamstede, and on the French aerodrome at Cherbourg. Le Bourget, Caen, Brest and Guernsey were frequently attacked.

All through that frenzied month of August the R.A.F. had their eye on these places, and a typically busy day was August 26, when 27 aerodromes in Germany, Holland, Belgium and France were bombed.

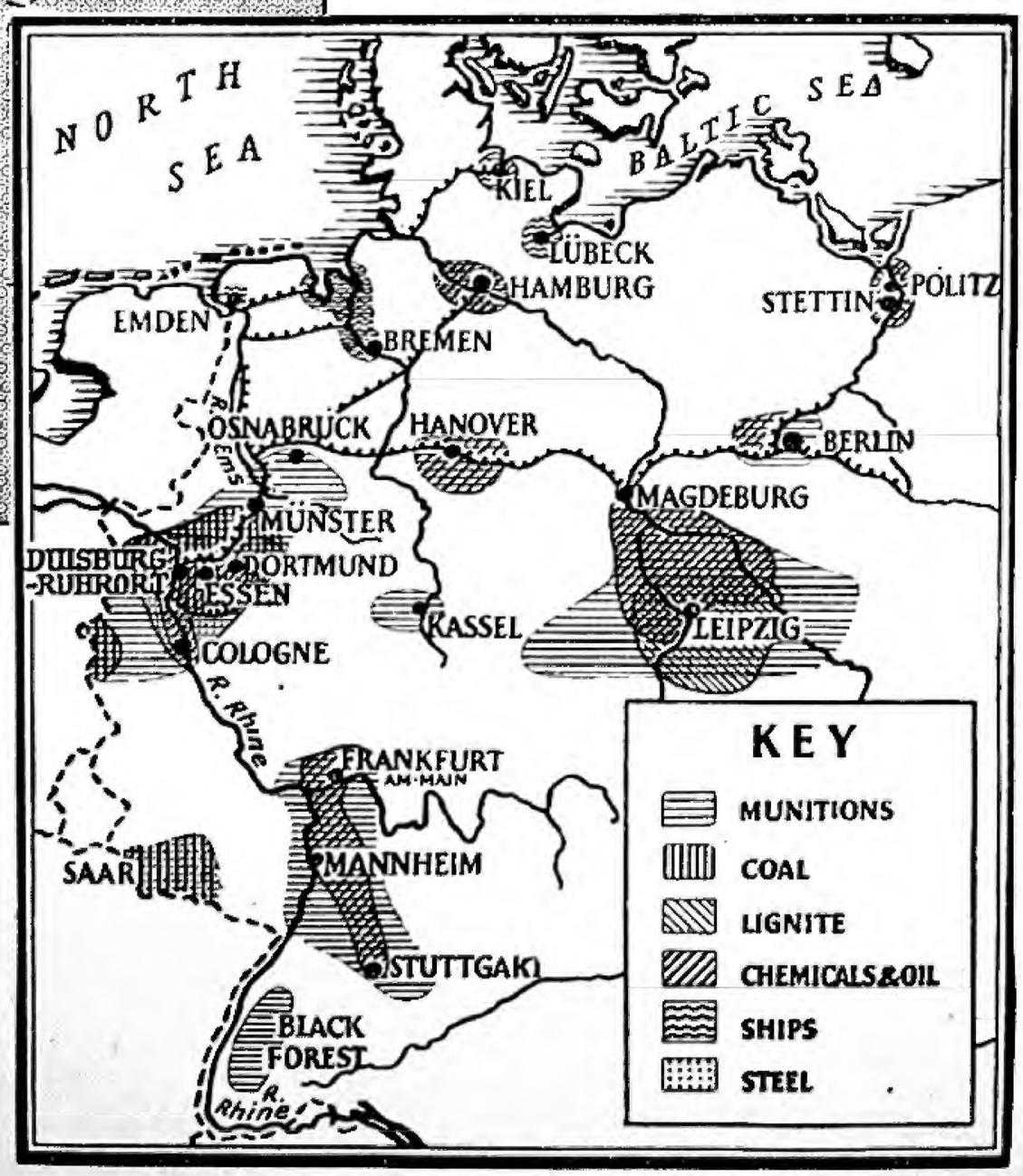
By September 7 Hitler, with a dangerous confidence born of many victories over less well prepared antagonists, had assembled huge fleets of barges in the Channel ports. They were intended to convey perhaps half a million men across the Channel in one monstrous effort to subjugate Britain and bring the war to an end. It fell to the Royal Air Force to frustrate the German scheme. On September 8, 10, 15, 19, 20, and 21 the whole coast in enemy hands—from Norway to the Bay of Biscay—was in the line of our bombers. The Channel ports became a furnace of death and destruction. Those perfect autumn days and nights were rendered hideous by the noise of our bursting bombs and the fierce flames of blazing docks, warehouses, barges and

Bombs on Invasion Fleet



AIR ATTACKS ON THE RUHR ZONE

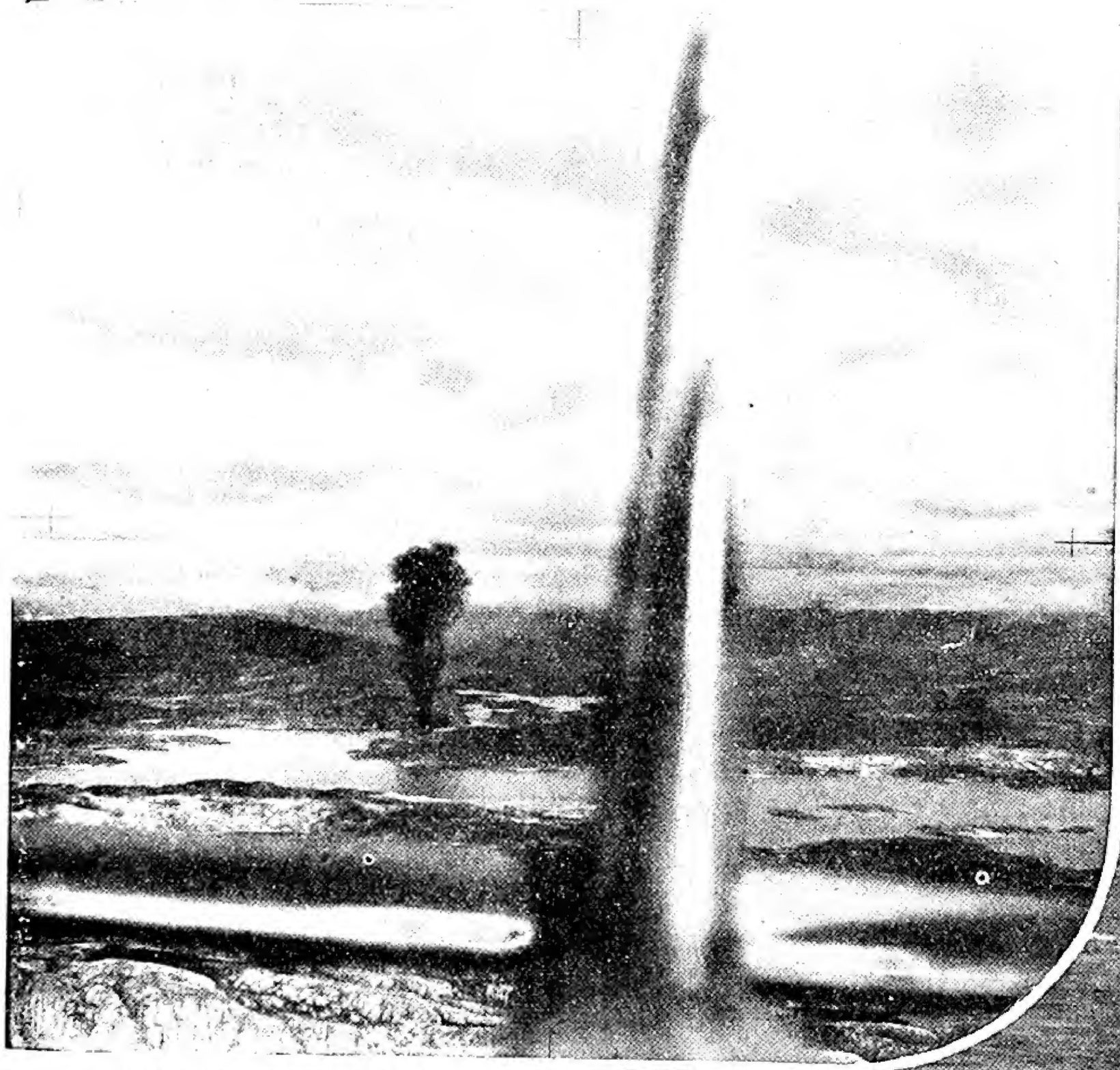
In conjunction with the map opposite (page 1334) the above diagram indicates the extent of the British attack on the war industries of the Ruhr up to the end of December, 1940. In circle, types of target bombed over the period, when over 1,500 objectives in 1,400 areas were successfully attacked.



GERMANY'S MAIN WAR INDUSTRIES

Where Germany's most important war industries were located and the nature of the products there obtained or manufactured. The entire region came nightly under the attack of the long-range bombers of the Royal Air Force during the autumn and winter of 1940.

Diagrams and Map, British Official: Crown Copyright



FINE EXPLOIT BY SKUAS

On August 8, 1940, a squadron of Skuas belonging to the Fleet Air Arm attacked the oil tanks and jetty at Dolvik, near Bergen, in German-occupied Norway This photograph taken from a returning Skua shows smoke rising from the burning oil depot.

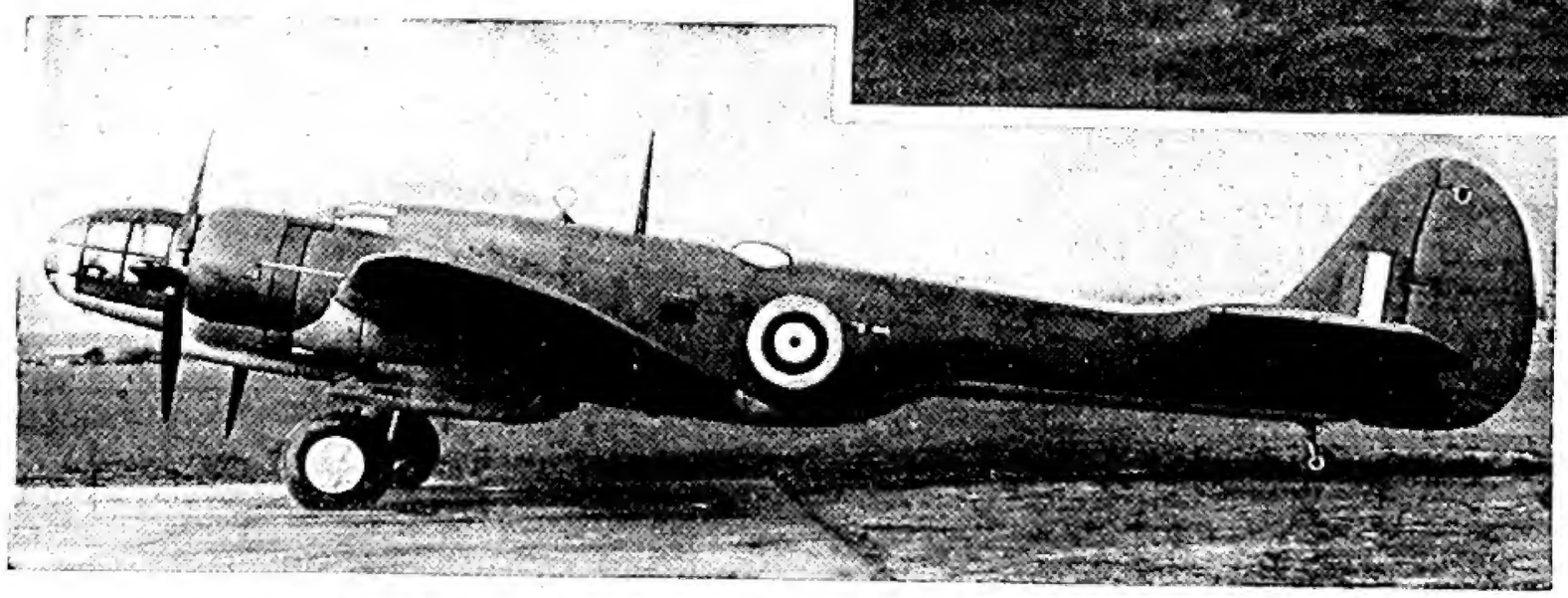
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

ships, as a result of our well-placed H.E.s and incendiaries. Under pressure of our bombing the German plan of invasion was wrecked.

Flushing, Antwerp, Ostend, Dunkirk, Zeebrugge, Boulogne, Calais and other places occur in the laconic reports of the R.A.F. activities. Nor was the enemy able to camouflage his activities or move into safer areas thanks to the vigilant reconnaissance work by Coastal Command along the entire Channel area. In addition to these operations aircraft were active night after night laying mines in enemy-occupied harbours and territorial waters.

The great victory of the R.A.F. over the Luftwaffe during the critical months from Dunkirk to the end of 1940 must always recall Mr. Churchill's words about the debt of so many to so few, for it was in that perilous time that the seed of Britain's inevitable victory was sown. Not only did Germany suffer grave losses in machines, but what was irreparable was the destruction of her best pilots. We, on our part, also lost some splendid men, but their number was comparatively few.

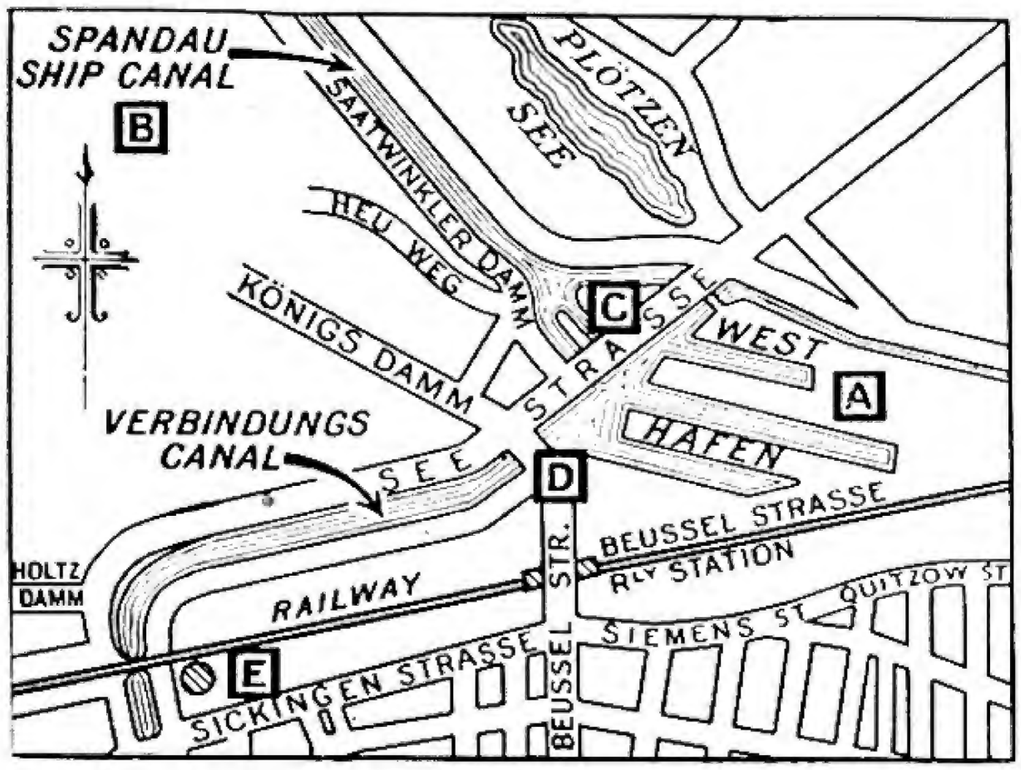
Among the deaths to be deplored was that of Flight-Lieut. John Charles Dundas, 609 (West Riding) Squadron, A.A.F., winner of the D.F.C. and bar. His death came at the moment of his greatest triumph. He had already accounted for twelve Nazis; the thirteenth was to be Germany's greatest fighter "ace," Major Helmuth Wieck, who had fought with the Luftwaffe in Spain and Poland, and had 56 air victories to his credit. (*See* photos in page 1332.) The combat between Dundas and Wieck took place over the Isle of Wight on November 28. A large "circus" of Messerschmitt 109s were flying north at the same height as



FLEET AIR ARM AIRCRAFT IN THE TARANTO RAID

The two types which took part in the dashing and highly successful raid on Taranto, of Nov. 11, 1940, were the Fairey Swordfish (one of which is shown, centre, just after dropping a torpedo) and the Glenn Martin Maryland, an American-built bomber, seen at a British aerodrome.

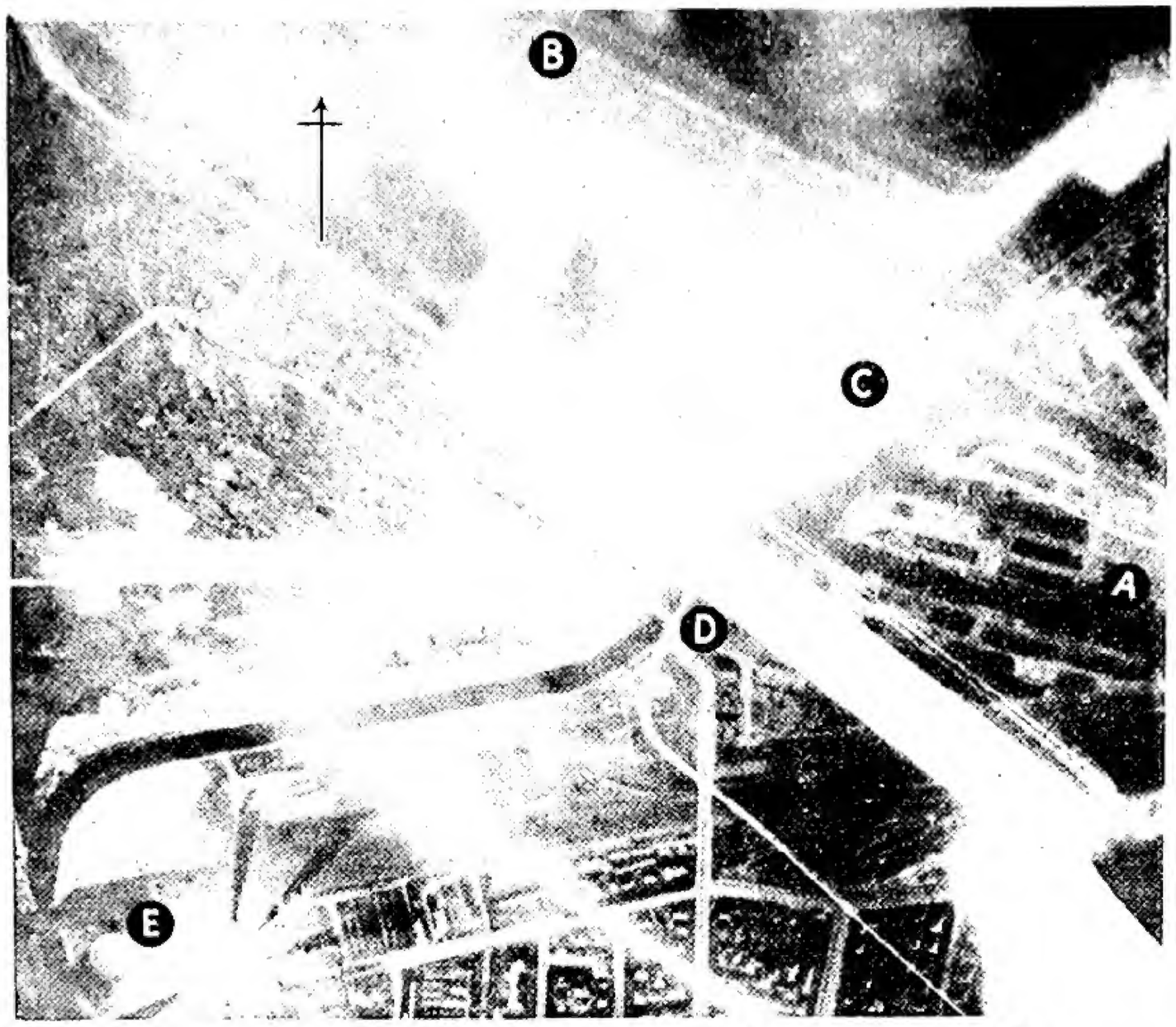
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; L.N.A.



BOMB DAMAGE IN BERLIN, OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1940

In early October, with the lengthening nights, R.A.F. raids became more fierce and frequent. The map and adjoining photo show the Spandau Ship Canal, Berlin: A, West Harbour; B, canal; C, bombs bursting on Inner Harbour; D, Königs Damm Bridge; E, Charlottenburg gas-holders (star effect is a lens reflection). Below, left, house in East Berlin; right, upper photo, Safety Service men putting out a fire due to incendiary bombs; lower, street in an industrial part of the German capital.

Map and top photo, British Official: Crown Copyright; other photos, Keystone; Wide World





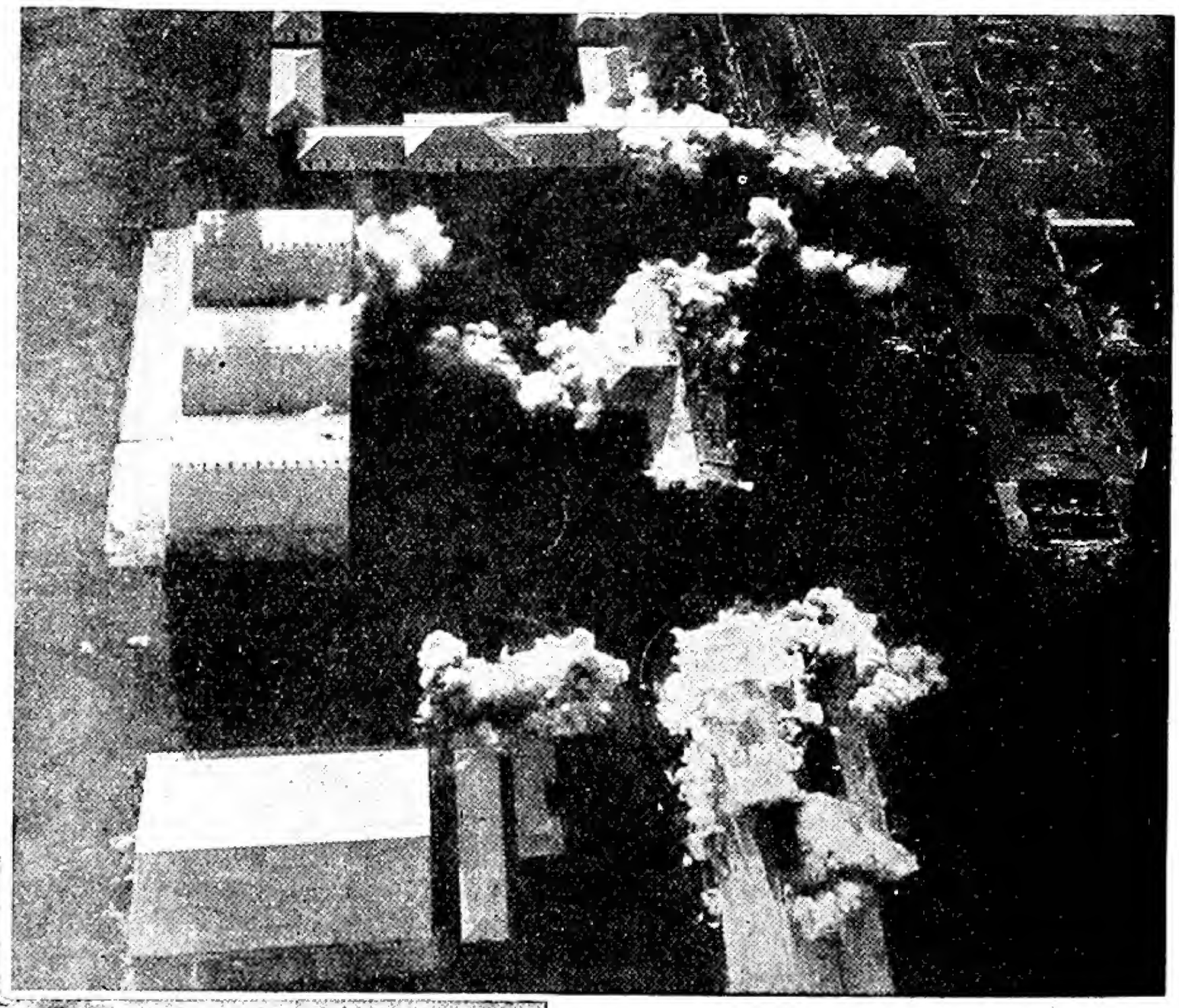


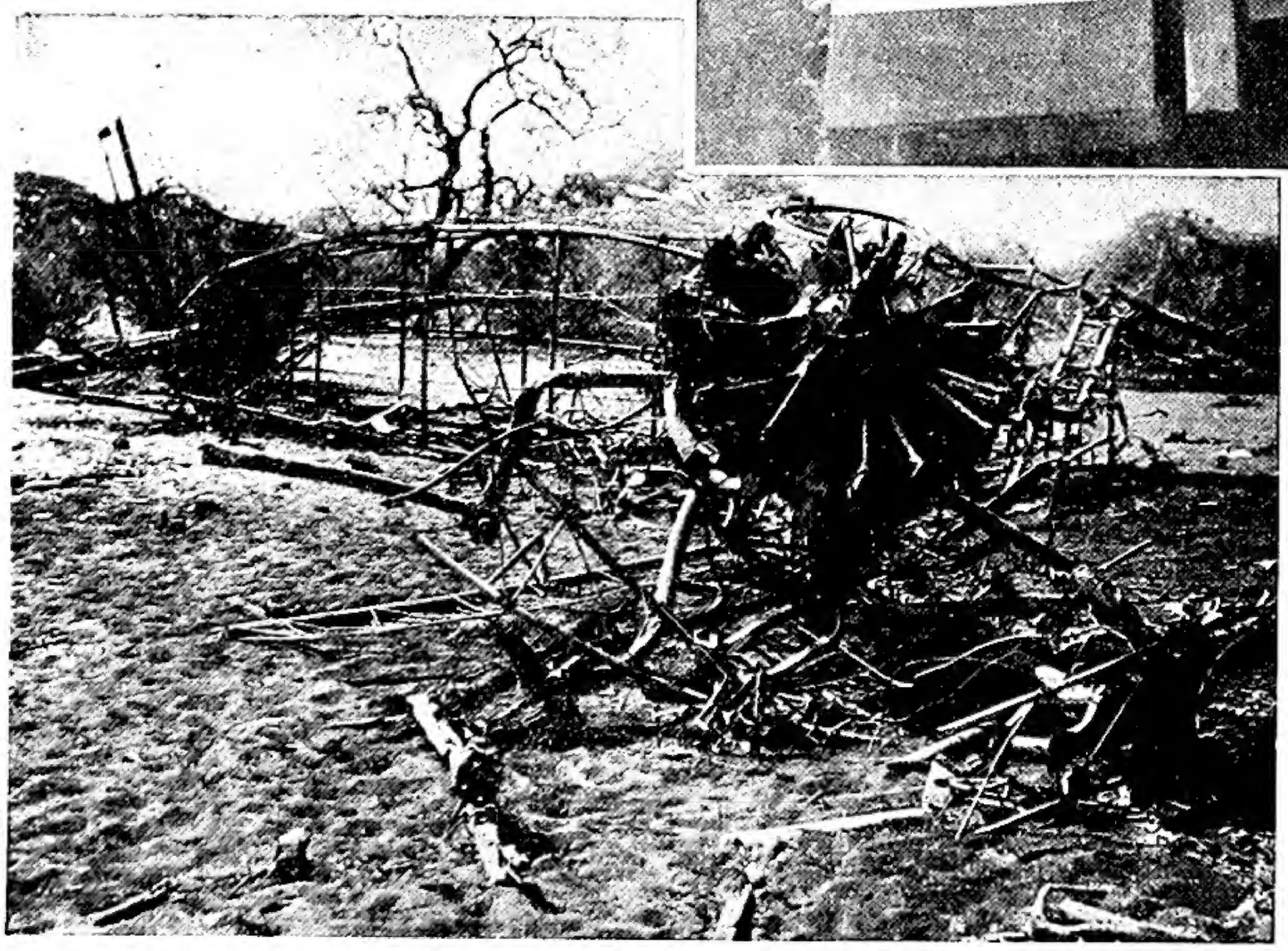


the R.A.F. Squadron. Three German machines broke away to engage the British. The squadron commander heard Flight-Lieut. Dundas exclaim, "Whoopee, I've got a 109."

"Good show, John," answered the squadron commander. "Re-form as quickly as possible." There was no reply to this, for Flight-Lieut. Dundas was, in his turn, shot down by one of the Messerschmitts accompanying Wieck.

A study of Britain's aerial activities against the enemy as a whole must include our attacks on Italian military objectives. Mussolini, who had so often boasted about his "incomparable" power, was painfully disillusioned when he learned that the Royal Air Force had visited his war factories in Milan and Turin on August 11, 1940. Making a trip of 1,600 miles, which involved a flight in bad weather above occupied France and the double journey over the Alps, our airmen arrived over their targets in Italy's industrial north.





PHASES OF THE CONFLICT WITH THE REGIA AERONAUTICA

Though the struggle of the Royal Air Force with the Luftwaffe claims first place in importance, the achievements of our bomber and fighter squadrons in other theatres of war were just as vital. Italian air bases in the Middle East were frequently attacked : top (August, 1940), British bombs have just dropped on Asmara aerodrome ; while below is the wreckage of a Caproni machine brought down by South Africans in Kenya (September, 1940).

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright

Several direct hits on the Caproni aeroplane factory at Milan and the Fiat plants at Turin were scored. Describing his experience, one of our pilots said :

"We circled the target for nearly an hour. There were some good fires when we left and they were spreading fast. I got the target with my first bomb and then planted the rest on in one stick. Fires and explosions were added to those already in progress." Another pilot said, "We came down to 4,500 feet and cracked the Caproni works good and hard. We could watch our bombs burst and knew they were on the target."

The Italian people realized with consternation that they were fighting an antagonist with an arm that could strike at their factories from afar.

From August until December, 1940, the R.A.F. dropped bombs on many occasions on the Pirelli electrical accessories factory at Sestro San Giovanni near Milan, the Fiat works at Turin, blast-furnaces at Aosta, military objectives in Naples and, at Poggio Reale, on the northern outskirts of the city, on a railway station, A.A. batteries and searchlight emplacements. There were also heavy raids on Brindisi and on Bari (chief port of embarkation for Albania).

The most devastating aerial attack on Fascism, however, occurred on November 11, when the Fleet Air Arm struck against the Italian navy bottled up in Taranto harbour.

Victory at Taranto

By the light of the moon our bombers came over their targets and dropped flares. Following them, 'planes carrying torpedoes, gliding down to fifty and even twenty feet, fired their missiles. Three battleships, two cruisers and two fleet auxiliaries were so severely damaged as to be put out of commission for several months. This, one of the major victories of aerial warfare, may be said to have completely broken the already drooping morale of the Italian navy.

The five months ending December 31, 1940, may well be regarded as the most arduous as they were the most perilous and heroic in British history. The efforts of the R.A.F. not only kept the Nazis out of Britain, but inflicted such damage on the German war machine as to undermine confidence in Hitler's tyrannical power—which most of the world was beginning to regard as irresistible.



ONE OF MANY ITALIAN BOMBERS WHICH CAME TO GRIEF

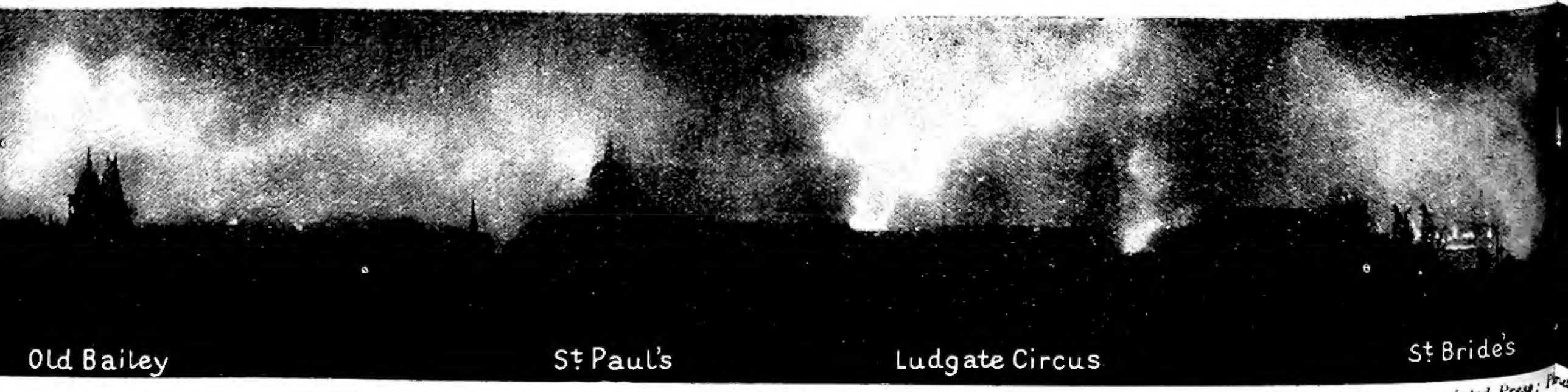
The performance of the Italian Air Force in the Middle East was notably poor. The aircraft were generally outclassed by those of the Royal Air Force, while neither in technical skill nor in daring did the pilots approach our own. Up to the end of December, 1940, 416 Italian aircraft were destroyed : here is a Savoia 79 bomber brought down by a Hurricane and transported to Alexandria. *Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright*





SAVAGERY THAT CLAMOURED FOR RETRIBUTION: CITY O

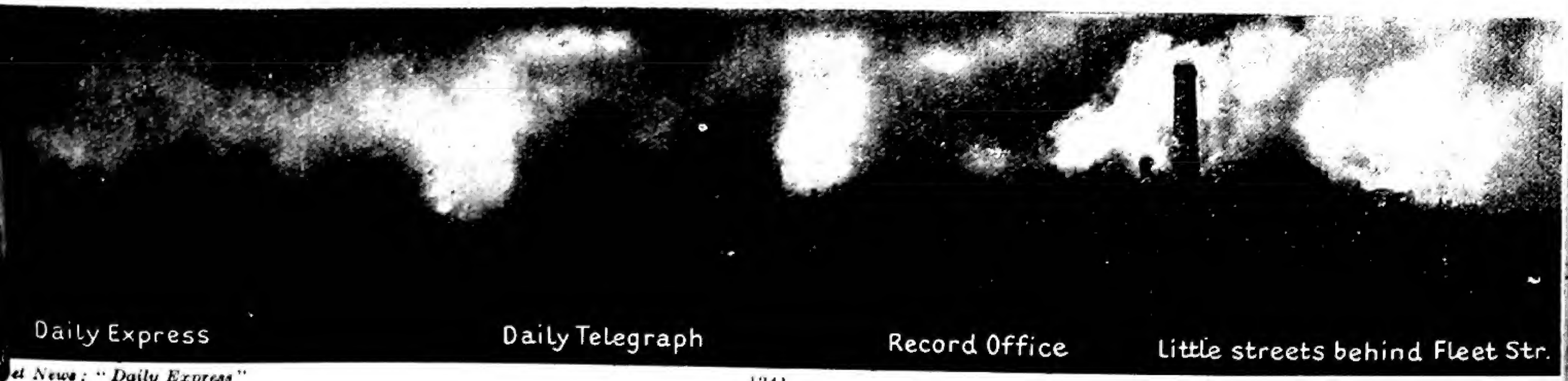
On the night of the last Sunday of the year the Luftwaffe launched a fire-raising raid upon the City's square mile—containing few military objectives but packed with irreplaceable treasures of historic, cultural and architectural value. Since the City was empty of all save a small number of caretakers, watchers, and guardians, an incendiary raid of such magnitude taxed the resources of the London fire-fighters to an impossible degree; many buildings were locked and access was difficult; bombs which at an early stage could have been readily put out gave rise to fires that could hardly be controlled. Eight Wren churches and the Guildhall were ruined;



Photos, Associated Press; Pre

LONDON'S ORDEAL ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 29, 1940

St. Paul's, ringed by fire in the great warehouses that hedged it around, was happily preserved from serious damage. Below is a remarkable composite photograph (built up from 30 exposures) of the Fleet Street region when the raid was at its height. It shows both the Cathedral and St. Bride's. Top, left, flames have consumed the body of St. Bride's and are threatening to destroy the fine steeple; centre, the western towers of St. Paul's, seen next day from near-by ruins; right, wrecked buildings in the ancient City street of Aldermanbury. (A photograph of the interior of St. Bride's is printed in page 1342.)



et News; "Daily Express"



Photo, Central Press

THE DESTRUCTION OF ST. BRIDE'S CHURCH, FLEET STREET

One of the eight masterpieces of Sir Christopher Wren that were destroyed by the Nazi fire-raid on the night of Sunday, December 29, 1940, St. Bride's was in some respects the most beautiful. Built in 1680–1700, it replaced an earlier edifice destroyed by the Fire of 1666. Its spire, 226 feet high, had been lowered some eight feet in rebuilding after damage by a storm in 1764. The photograph in page 1340 shows it on the fatal night, lit up by the inferno started by the enemy bombs. Above is the scene of pitiable devastation on the morning of December 30: in the background is the North wall, looking out into Fleet Street.

Chapter 128

AFTER THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN: TWO MONTHS OF USELESS NIGHT BOMBING

Three Months' Air Raid Casualties—Nazis Resort to Fighter-Bombers—Daylight Raids Diminish, and Heavy Night Bombing Begins—Horrors of the Coventry Mass-Murder—Savage Attacks on Production Centres in the Midlands and the West—Southampton's Ordeals—London Becomes the Main Target—The Fire Raid of December 29, 1940

By the end of October, 1940, the real Battle of Britain had come to an end, though the enemy did not cease to send his aircraft across the Channel. The Royal Air Force had taught him a fearful lesson, though it is true that during the period August 8–October 31 the German day and night raids on England had resulted in the deaths of 14,281 people, most of them civilians, 18,078 civilians being seriously injured. Heavy material damage was done also—in the London area the docks suffered, and Buckingham Palace was hit; hundreds of buildings were destroyed all over the country. Yet in these three months the R.A.F. fighter pilots had torn to ribbons the great formations of the Luftwaffe, and in daylight our Hurricanes and Spitfires had sent to their doom at least 2,375 German bombers, dive-bombers and fighters. It became known later that enemy plans for the invasion of Britain had thus gone awry.

After the most reckless abandon the formula forced upon him by the R.A.F. Fighter Command compelled Goering to use greater caution in his attacks. By daylight he no longer dispatched heavy bombers flying in huge formations to do the task. His aircraft came over in much smaller numbers and the Messerschmitt 109 E single-seater fighter was also used as a bomber. This machine, which had a range of only 621 miles, carried one or two bombs on an exposed rack beneath the fuselage and was thus crudely altered. The whole modification shows that the German is at times singularly lacking in ingenuity and improvisation. In the first week of November, 1940, the use of the Me 109 E as a fighter-bomber became noticeable. On November 1 day raids were made on London, South-east England, the Eastern counties, Portsmouth and Lincolnshire; and while some of the attacks were carried out by Nazi formations of 50 machines, others were made by single Messerschmitts.

Nazi Fighter-Bombers

It was on this day, too, that some Italian bombers crossed our coast, but they were driven away by anti-aircraft guns and it was reported that they dropped no bombs. These Italian machines, it was disclosed later, belonged to an expeditionary force known as the Corpo Aereo Italiano, of which squadrons were stationed at aerodromes in Belgium. The Italian press reported ludicrous and fantastic victories achieved by this unit. It was stated that the Italian fighters had accounted for scores of R.A.F. Hurricanes and Spitfires, and that the heavy bombers had attacked London with great success.

On Monday, November 11, German formations crossed the Channel in an attempt to reach London, but nearly all were turned away by Hurricanes and Spitfires, so that only a few reached the objective. On this same day a formation of Ju 87 dive-bombers with escorts of Me 109s made an onslaught on a convoy sailing off the North coast of Kent. R.A.F. fighters tore into the scene and in a few moments half a dozen Ju 87s crashed into the sea, with six of the escorting enemy fighters. In this same attack one Me 109 and four Ju 87s were destroyed by the A.A. guns of the naval vessels escorting the merchantmen.

On November 11 some Italian bombers, with an escort amounting to 60 fighters, also tried to bomb ships in convoy.

Brief Italian 'Invasion'

Again, R.A.F. fighter pilots intercepted the enemy; five Italian Fiat C.R. 42 fighters and eight Fiat B.R. 20 bombers were promptly shot down. The remaining Italians who were still in the air at once fled. The two types of aircraft in question had been shot down by the F.A.A. and R.A.F. in the Middle East by hundreds, and ever since Italy's entry into the war the inferior equipment of the Regia Aeronautica had been revealed again



BRIEF AND INGLORIOUS PART IN AIR WAR AGAINST BRITAIN

By his special request, so Mussolini averred, some of his airmen were allowed to join the Nazis in the air war over Britain. Attacking on November 11, 1940, thirteen Italian machines were soon shot down—the one illustrated, a Fiat C.R. 42, coming to ground at Corton, near Lowestoft.

Photo, G.P.U.



and again. The C.R. 42 was a biplane with a top speed of only 270 m.p.h., poorly armed, with only two Breda Safat machine-guns. It was thus easily disposed of by the Hurricane and Spitfire. The B.R. 20 was one of the standard bombers of the Italian Air Force; it had a cruising range of 1,240 miles, a bomb load of 3,500 lb., and a maximum speed of 264 m.p.h. One of the eight bombers and two of the five C.R. 42s destroyed on this occasion crashed on land, and those of the crew that survived were captured. For the first time since the Romans left Britain nearly 2,000 years ago Tuscan enemies were thus made prisoners in this country.

Throughout November the Nazis continued to use their Me 109s in the role of bomber. They were flown over at a great height or, if there were low clouds and bad visibility, single machines would carry out sporadic raids at comparatively low altitudes. Sometimes the objectives were R.A.F. aerodromes, but quite frequently the Luftwaffe seemed to be merely carrying out futile "nuisance raids." Sometimes, too, the aircraft would come down low over a town and use its guns against people in the streets On one day in November a low-flying Dornier was brought down through coming into the range of a party of Home Guards, who used their rifles with commendable skill and promptitude.

On November 14 the announcement was made of the award of the Victoria Cross to Flight-Lieut. J. B. Nicolson for most conspicuous bravery on August 16 (*see* page 1164). The Air Ministry announced a number of new R.A.F. appointments and promotions. Amongst these was that of Air Vice-Marshal W. S. Douglas (promoted Air Marshal) to Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Fighter Command, in place of Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh C. T. Dowding.

After the terrific onslaughts of August, September and October the daylight attacks of the enemy diminished, but heavy night raids were made by the Luftwaffe as November ran its course. On the first Sunday of the month (November 3), however, Londoners experienced a night free from "alerts"—the first since September 7. This lull was brief, and on the following night the capital was bombed from dusk till dawn. From then until November 10 the main attacks were directed against London.

Four nights later (November 14–15), the Germans carried out a devastating raid on Coventry—made, according to the enemy, in reprisal for the R.A.F. raid on Munich on the night of November 8. It was said to have been organized by General Field-Marshal Sperrle, who had commanded the notorious Nazi "Condor Legion" during the Spanish civil war. The Coventry raid (which caused heavy casualties and demolished churches, dwelling-



WHEN THE NAZIS BEGAN THEIR CONCENTRATED ATTACKS

First of its type, a devastating mass attack was made on Coventry by the Luftwaffe during the night of November 14–15, 1940. These (Nazi) photographs are stated to show (top) Goering with Luftwaffe commanders planning the raid; and (right) a view of the Coventry fires taken from a German 'plane soon after the raid began.

Photos, E.N.A.; Associated Press



A.O. C.-IN-C. FIGHTER COMMAND

In November, 1940, Air Marshal William Sholto Douglas, C.B. (later Sir Sholto), was appointed to the Fighter Command in succession to Sir Hugh Dowding, who for over four years had held the post. Air Marshal Douglas was born in 1893 and joined the R.F.C. in 1914.

Photo, Wide World









EVEN THIS COULD NOT DAUNT COVENTRY

Hundreds of tons of explosives and thousands of incendiaries were dropped on Coventry during the night of November 14-15, 1940. The Cathedral (right) and about a thousand other structures were destroyed. Top, formerly a busy shopping centre. The well-known effigy of 'Peeping Tom' (above) was not harmed. Centre, some of the many bereaved filing past the grave at the mass burial of victims.

Photos, Keystone; "Daily Mirror"; "News Chronicle"; L.N.A.

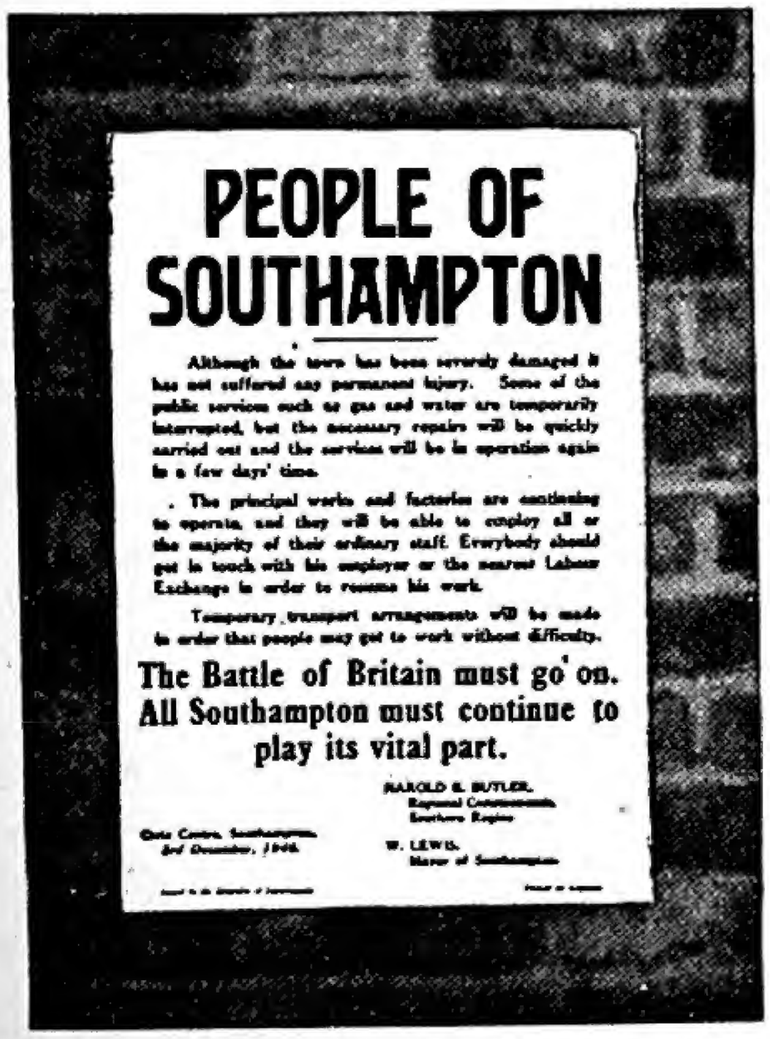
SOUTHAMPTON DID CONTINUE TO PLAY ITS VITAL PART

On the night of November 30, 1940, Southampton was raided for seven hours and was again badly bombed on the following night. A Proclamation by the Mayor (see page 1347) on December 3 read : 'The Battle of Britain must go on. All Southampton must continue to play its vital part.' Top, all that was left of their home near Bargate. Centre, salvaged furniture. Below, homeless people setting out for new quarters, found for them by an emergency centre, such as that shown at the left.

Photos, "Daily Mirror"; Sport & General; Fox

houses, shops and factories) marked the introduction by the Germans of concentrated bombings against single objectives. Hitherto they had divided up their attacking formations, and their raids, on any given night, had been directed against a number of targets.

For this raid, which the Nazis claimed was the biggest in the bloodstained history of air warfare, they invented with sub-human pride the term "Coventrating" as a standard of civilian destruction. Bombing from a high altitude from dusk to dawn, they dropped



THE SPIRIT OF SOUTHAMPTON

Issued by the Mayor from the bomb-scarred Civic Centre after the raids that sorely tried the town (see page 1346 and 1348), this Proclamation called upon the people to resume work in order that the vital activities of the town should continue.

some 500 tons of H.E. bombs and 30,000 incendiaries, and on that dreadful morning much of the city lay in ruins or was still burning. Of the lovely Cathedral the tower and spire and the blackened outer walls alone remained. Two other churches, two hospitals, many hotels, clubs, cinemas, hundreds of stores, shops, and many office buildings were destroyed; roads were blocked and thousands were homeless in this city of fire and death. When the King and Mr. Herbert Morrison, the Minister of Home Security, visited the city on November 16 the ruins of Broadgate and other streets were still burning. Aid was rushed from outside, the Army and Government Departments cooperating with the Corporation, and life, though muted, went on again. Perhaps the outstanding fact was the failure of Nazi savagery to interfere to any serious extent with war production. They caused over 1,000 casualties and laid the centre of the city in ruin, but the factories, for which Coventry is famous, were only slightly affected. On November 20 a mass burial, in four long trenches, of 172 victims of the raid took place.

On the night after that of the mass raid on Coventry there followed a heavy attack on London, causing widespread damage.

Then during the latter part of the month the attack was switched from London to production centres in the Midlands, the West of England, and to Merseyside and Southampton. In the Midlands, Birmingham, which had already had several savage attacks, suffered severely on the nights of November 19–20 and the 22nd. The damage was more scattered than in other cities, for Birmingham covers, together with its suburbs, an area of 80 square miles. Several streets, both shopping and residential, suffered severely, and the Cathedral and the Art Gallery were damaged.

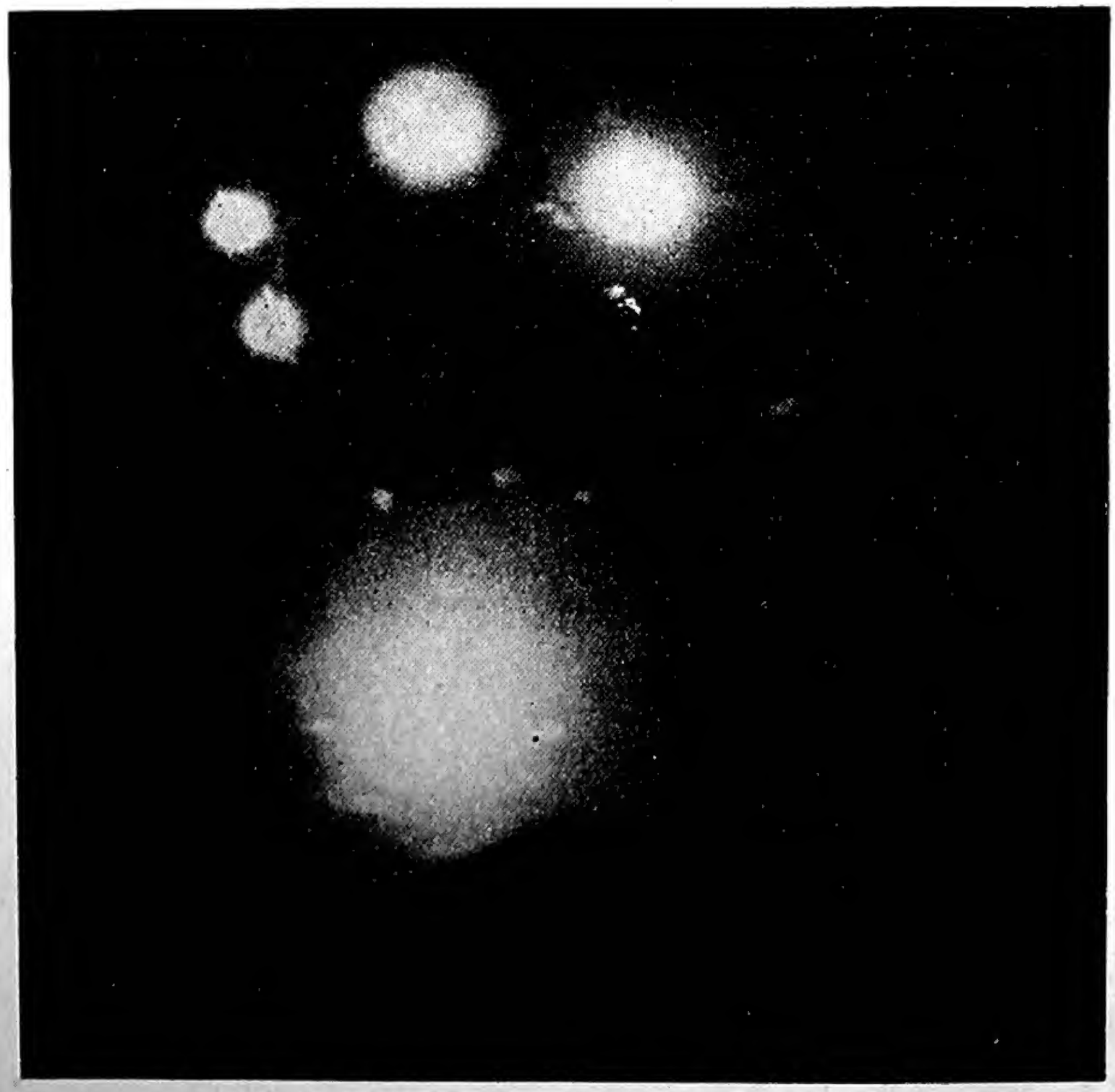
A prolonged and intensive raid on Southampton on the night of November



AWARDS FOR CIVILIAN GALLANTRY

Broadcasting on September 23, 1940, H.M. the King announced the institution of the George Cross (left) and George Medal as 'a new mark of honour for all ranks of men and women in civilian life.' Names of the first recipients—who had won the honour for bravery during or after air raids—were announced on October 1.

Photos, Chiswick Press



HOW NAZI RAIDERS LIT UP THEIR TARGETS

In order to illuminate the country beneath them the enemy raiders dropped many flares, which as a rule were promptly shot out by marksmen of our ground defence units. In this photograph the tracer shells fired from the ground are clearly visible beside the parachute flares.

Photo, Keystone



THIS WAS A SHOPPING ARCADE IN BIRMINGHAM

In November, 1940, there were heavy raids on Midland towns, and Birmingham suffered with others. Glass-roofed arcades, such as that shown here, were ill suited to such ordeals, and were generally reduced to debris by the blast and concussion



TRAIL OF THE LUFTWAFFE AT BRISTOL AND LIVERPOOL

A bizarre scene is presented by this gallery of the Bristol Museum, for some exhibits are apparently unharmed, while others are wrecked. Below, during one of many raids on Merseyside and Liverpool, a fire engine plunged into a bomb crater just after the missile had fallen. Salvage work is seen in progress.

Photos, Associated Press; "Daily Mirror"; Planet News



16–17 caused heavy casualties and brought ruin to the centre of the city, but the worst raid was that on Saturday, November 30, which lasted for seven hours and was repeated the following night. After the two nights of terror thousands were rendered homeless, and churches, theatres, cinemas, hospitals and many other buildings destroyed. In an earlier daylight raid the great Civic Centre, completed only in 1939, had been severely damaged, and now the Law Courts, Municipal and Police Offices in the Centre all suffered, causing total damage of over a quarter of a million pounds. Considering the fury of the November 30–December 1 raids, the total casualties, about 370, were light. The King made a tour of the stricken city on December 5.

In the West of England the city of Bristol suffered heavily, particularly on December 2 and 6. Among the important buildings that were damaged or destroyed in Bristol's raids were parts of the University, many hospitals and churches, including its famous Temple Church, St. Peter's Hospital, an ancient almshouse, the Old Dutch House dating from the reign of William III, and certain 14th-century almshouses.

Bomb Ravage at Bristol

At the end of November daylight attacks were again attempted in London on the 30th, preceded by widespread and continuous raids the night before on the centre and on the Home Counties.

During these winter months of fierce raids in the long hours of darkness, when casualties and damage were heavy, our defences seemed to be ineffective. Wide disappointment was felt that, though in the daytime our fighter pilots had wrought havoc with the Nazis, at night they seemed to be faced with an impossible task. Later it was realized that in those difficult days and nights of winter ceaseless efforts had been made to meet the menace of the night-raider. New long-range night-fighters were being rapidly turned out, and every type of machine which seemed to have qualities suitable for night defence was tried. New methods of aircraft location were developed experimentally, and "radiolocation," the existence of which was kept secret at the time, had begun to prove itself—though both apparatus and operators were yet too few. Formidable as were our ground defences under certain conditions, it became clear that the solution of the night-raider menace was to be found only in the development of the night-fighter aeroplane, which must be given prompt and accurate information about the enemy.

In the last month of 1940 the Luftvaffe's power in the air was somewhat impeded by weather conditions, and there were several nights when no raids were made anywhere in Britain. On other nights the enemy's attacks were weak and brief, and it was assumed that the German pilots, following instructions sent by wireless, had turned back and returned to their bases in order to avoid landing in bad visibility due to fog. Nevertheless, a number of fierce onslaughts on our cities marked the close of the year.

Bad Weather Stopped Raids

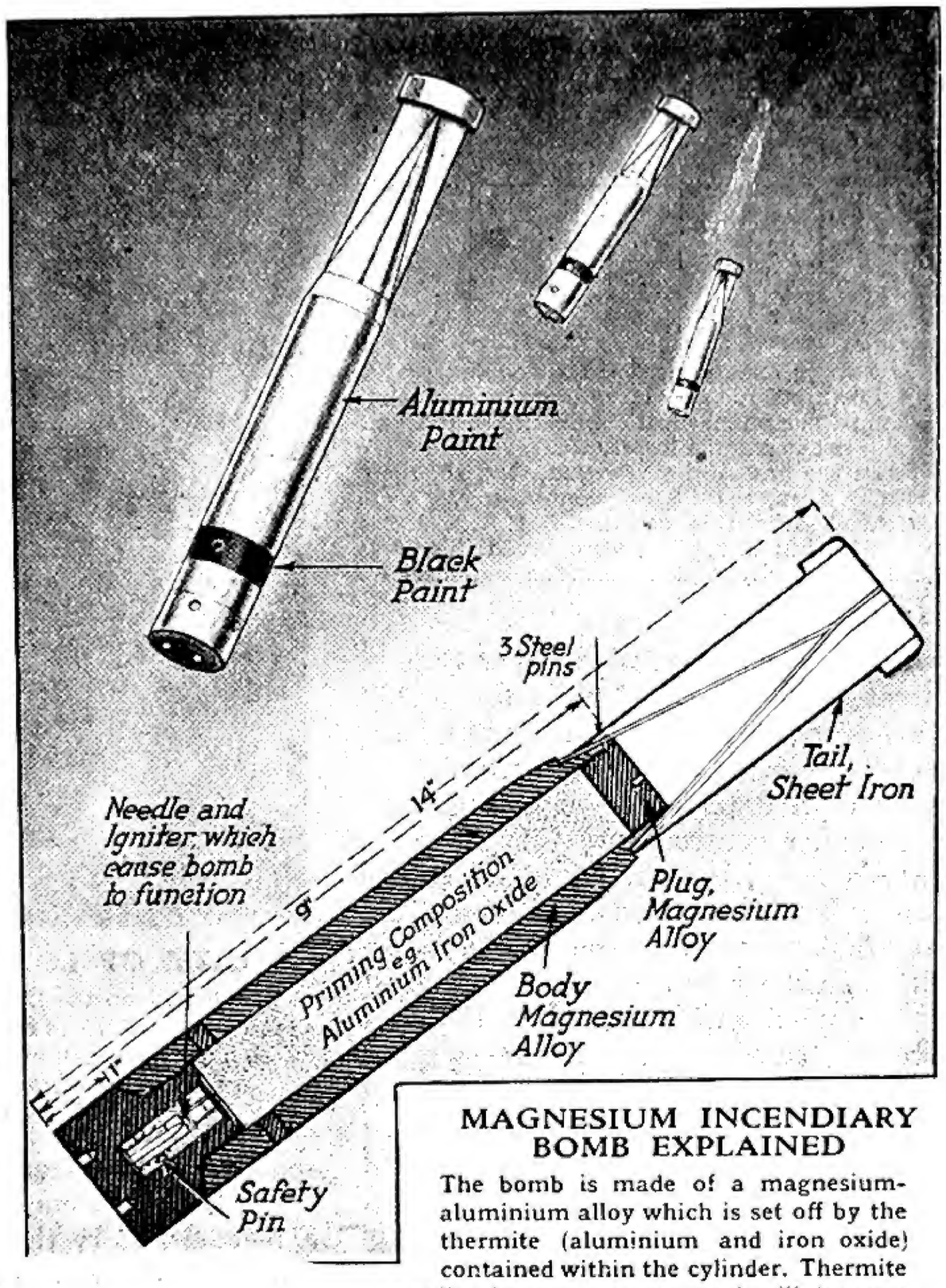
After an interval of reduced activity London, on Sunday, December 8, had a 14-hour attack which was one of the most severe raids yet experienced. Despite one of the heaviest defensive barrages that had until then been put up, flares, incendiaries and H.E. bombs were dropped all over the central area and the outskirts, doing considerable damage. The Temple, which had suffered tragic ruin in earlier raids in October and November, was by now a scene of general devastation.

Subsequently the Germans stated that their bombers had come from all the aerodromes they occupied in France, Holland and Belgium. A communiqué claimed that 100,000 incendiary bombs and 700 tons of H.E. bombs had been dropped on the Metropolis. In the third week of December Liverpool and the Merseyside were the main objectives. Incendiary bombs were used by the thousand and many fires were started.

The Midlands again had their share of the Nazi attacks, Sheffield being the main objective on the nights of December 12 and 15. In both raids a large number of incendiaries were employed and considerable material damage was done. Manchester followed as a Nazi target on the night of December 22, when the Royal Exchange, one of the finest buildings of its kind in the Kingdom, and the Cathedral, were both wrecked, as well as many other buildings.

On the night of the last Sunday of the year (December 29), choosing a time when they judged that the city's commercial buildings would be left unwatched, the Nazis made a gigantic fire-raid on the City of London. Many churches and other historic buildings in the City were destroyed.

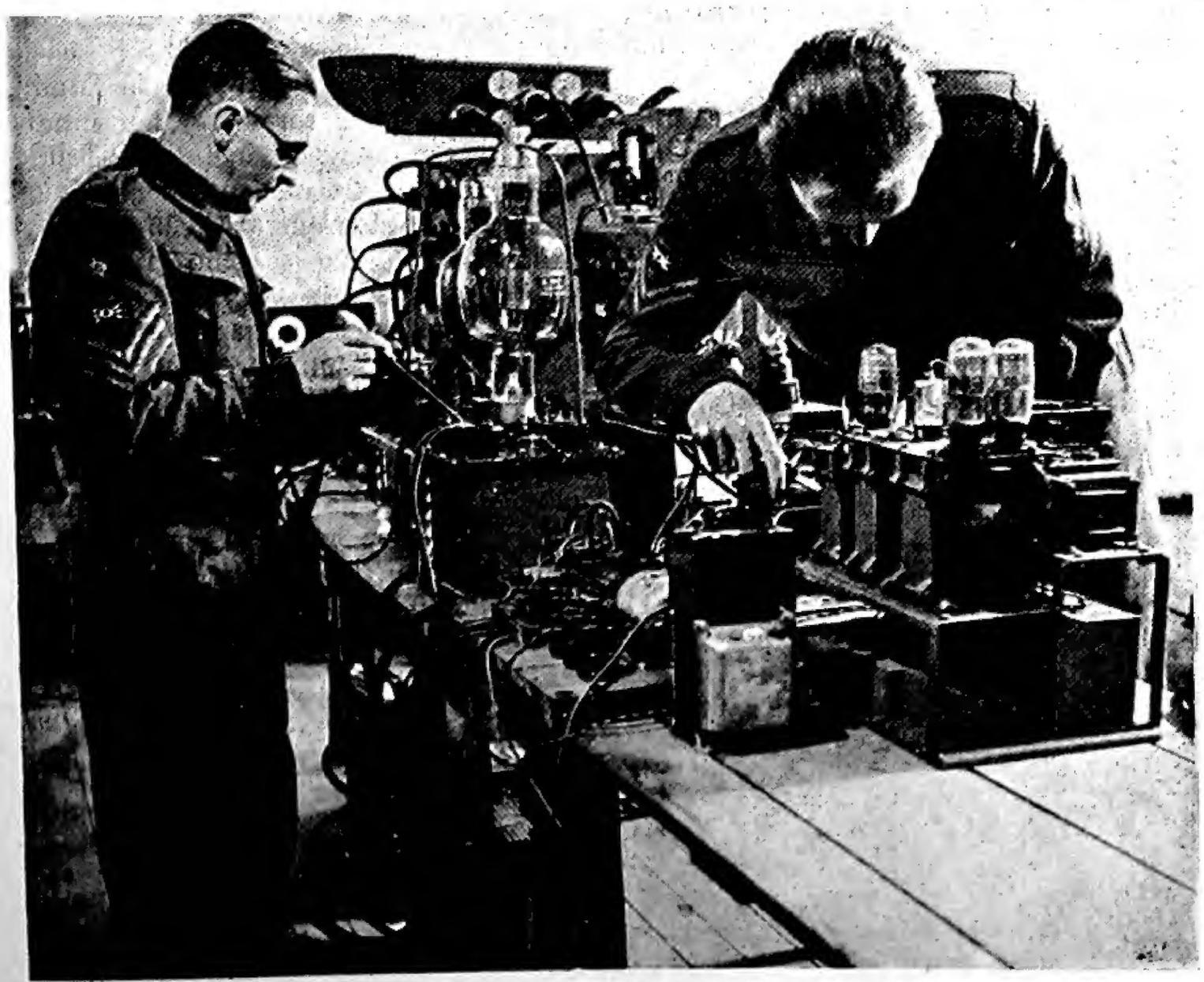
Thousands of incendiaries were showered upon the square mile of the City that evening in a raid which ended before midnight and included, for reasons never made clear, no organized high explosive attack. The results were disastrous, and throughout the first hours of the night there raged in the City and in Southwark an inferno



MAGNESIUM INCENDIARY BOMB EXPLAINED

The bomb is made of a magnesium-aluminium alloy which is set off by the thermite (aluminium and iron oxide) contained within the cylinder. Thermite supplies its own oxygen, and will burn at the enormously high temperature of 3,000 deg. C. It is ignited by a percussion cap and special composition in the head of the bomb. It weighs about 2 lb. 2 oz., and is kept head down by the tail vanes. When it strikes, a detonating pin is driven against the percussion cap : the thermite is ignited and its intense heat fires the casing. Proper treatment is to localize action by sand spread over the bomb, and to spray surrounding material with water. Water poured or spurted on the bomb is broken up into its component gases and may cause dangerous explosions. (See also illus. page 1125.)

Courtesy of "The Sphere"



RADIOLOCATION PERSONNEL AT WORK ON INSTRUMENTS

Foremost among Britain's anti-aircraft defences was the system of locating aircraft at a distance by means of radio waves. Little may be said about it and at this time little was known of it except that it used the principle of 'echo sounding'—the aircraft sought being located by the time taken for a reflection of wireless waves sent out from the instrument to reach the radiolocator. Above, radiolocation men servicing instruments. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

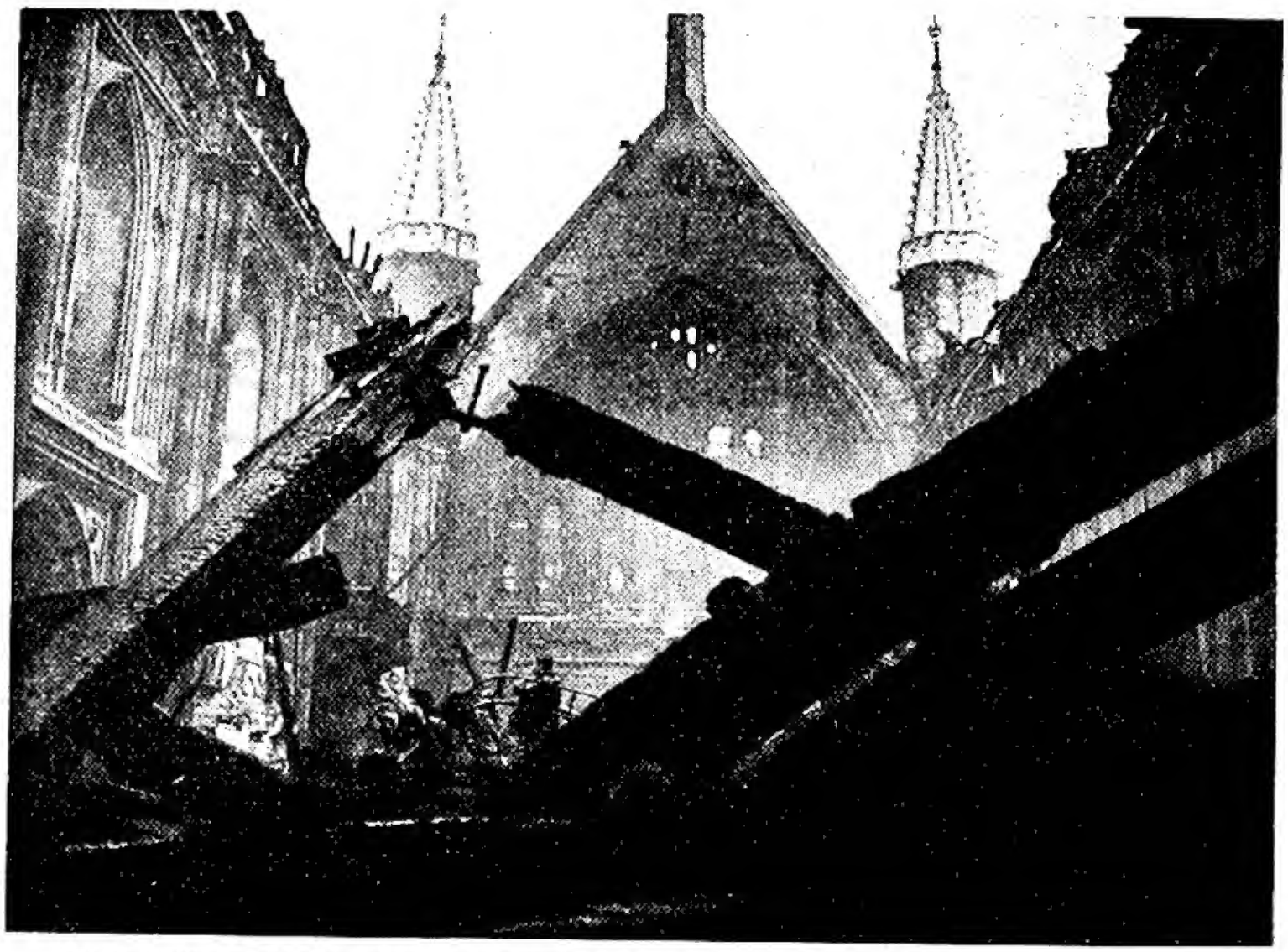
Enemy and British Aircraft Losses
Over Britain, Nov.-Dec., 1940

	Nov. 1-10	Nov. 11-20	Nov. 21-30	Dec. 1-15	Dec. 16-31	Totals
German	75	87	43	37	12	254
Italian	—	13	7	—	—	20
British	28	12	16	8	1	65
British Pilots Saved	9	8	9	7	1	34

Of the 274 enemy aircraft destroyed, 24 were shot down at night. It was estimated that German personnel lost amounted to 570. British net personnel losses, 26.

From the first raid on Britain, Oct. 16, 1939, up to Dec. 31, 1940, **3,045** enemy aircraft were destroyed over this country. R.A.F. losses were **847**, but 427 pilots were saved. The first bombs were dropped on London outskirts on August 28, 1940.

which was aptly entitled "The Second Great Fire of London." Some 150 'planes took part, and dropped at least 10,000 incendiary bombs. Before dawn more than 10,000 firemen had got the fires under control, but City workers on the Monday morning found everywhere blackened ruins. The ancient Guildhall seemed to be but a shell, although it was, in fact, later re-roofed and brought into use again. Eight of Wren's churches were destroyed or gutted, and round St. Paul's Cathedral fire had raged in many of the wholesale warehouses, while most of Paternoster Row and Warwick Lane, for the best part of a century the home of publishers and booksellers, was but a series of smoking ruins. The Cathedral itself, thanks largely to the devoted work of the Cathedral watchers and firemen, was unharmed, but of the Chapter House only gaunt brick walls



CITY OF LONDON GUILDHALL AS THE LUFTWAFFE LEFT IT

In the raid on the last Sunday night of December, 1940, Guildhall suffered grievously by fire, despite the efforts of its own firemen and others, flames spreading from near-by buildings. Here is the blackened shell of the Banqueting Hall or Great Hall. Numerous notable monuments in the Hall were destroyed. The Hall was later temporarily re-roofed and brought into use.

Photo, Wide World

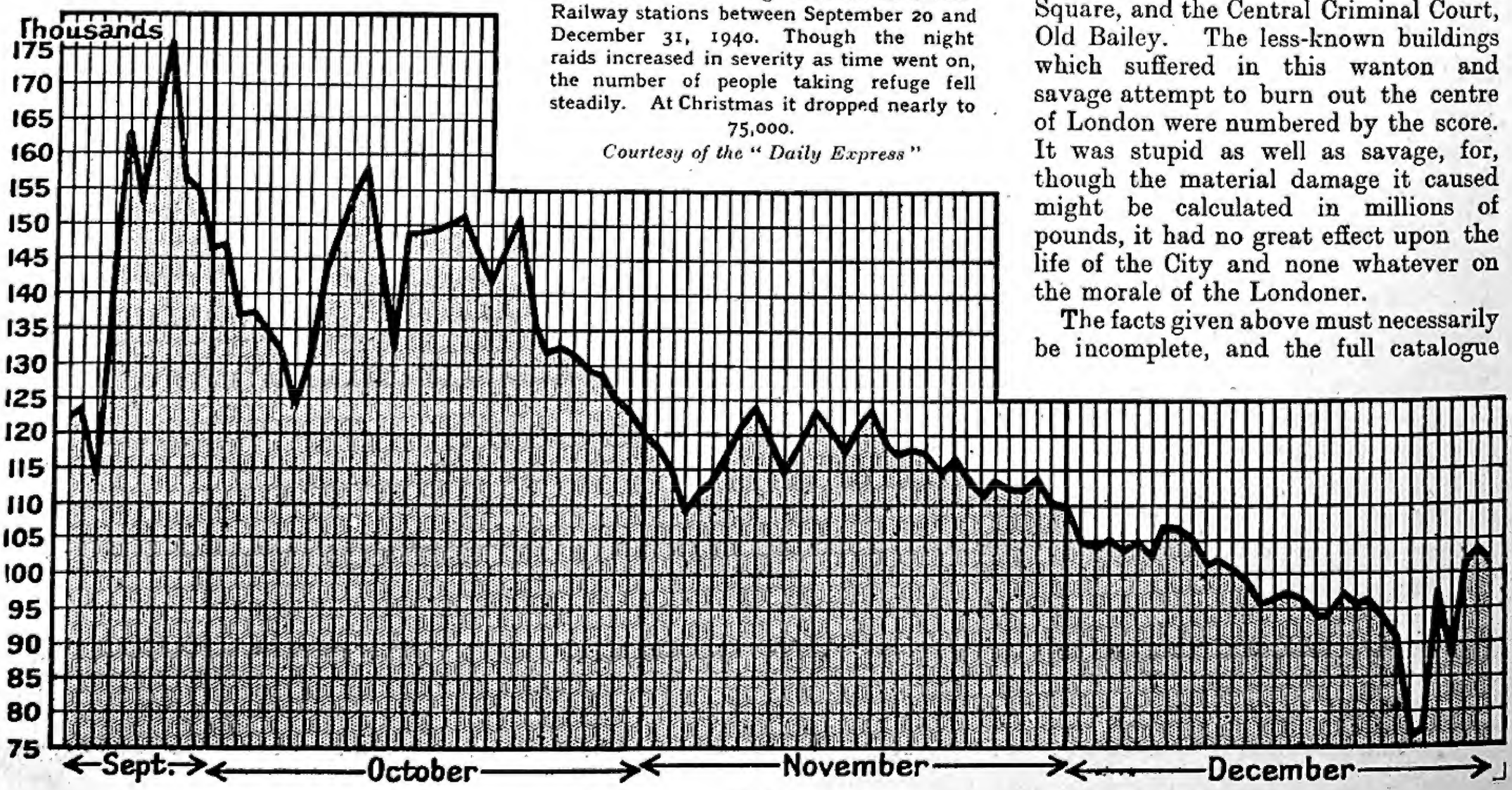
remained. The Wren churches destroyed were St. Lawrence Jewry, Gresham Street; St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury; St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe, Blackfriars; St. Stephen's, Coleman Street; St. Vedast, Foster Lane; Christ Church, Newgate Street; St. Ann's, Gresham Street, and St. Bride's, Fleet Street. Those who were in Fleet Street on that terrible night will not easily forget the tiered Wren steeple flaming like a monstrous torch. Other famous buildings damaged included Trinity House, Dr. Johnson's house in Gough Square, and the Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey. The less-known buildings which suffered in this wanton and savage attempt to burn out the centre of London were numbered by the score. It was stupid as well as savage, for, though the material damage it caused might be calculated in millions of pounds, it had no great effect upon the life of the City and none whatever on the morale of the Londoner.

The facts given above must necessarily be incomplete, and the full catalogue

THOUSANDS OF 'TUBE' SHELTERERS

This graph shows the estimated number of persons who took refuge in the London Tube Railway stations between September 20 and December 31, 1940. Though the night raids increased in severity as time went on, the number of people taking refuge fell steadily. At Christmas it dropped nearly to 75,000.

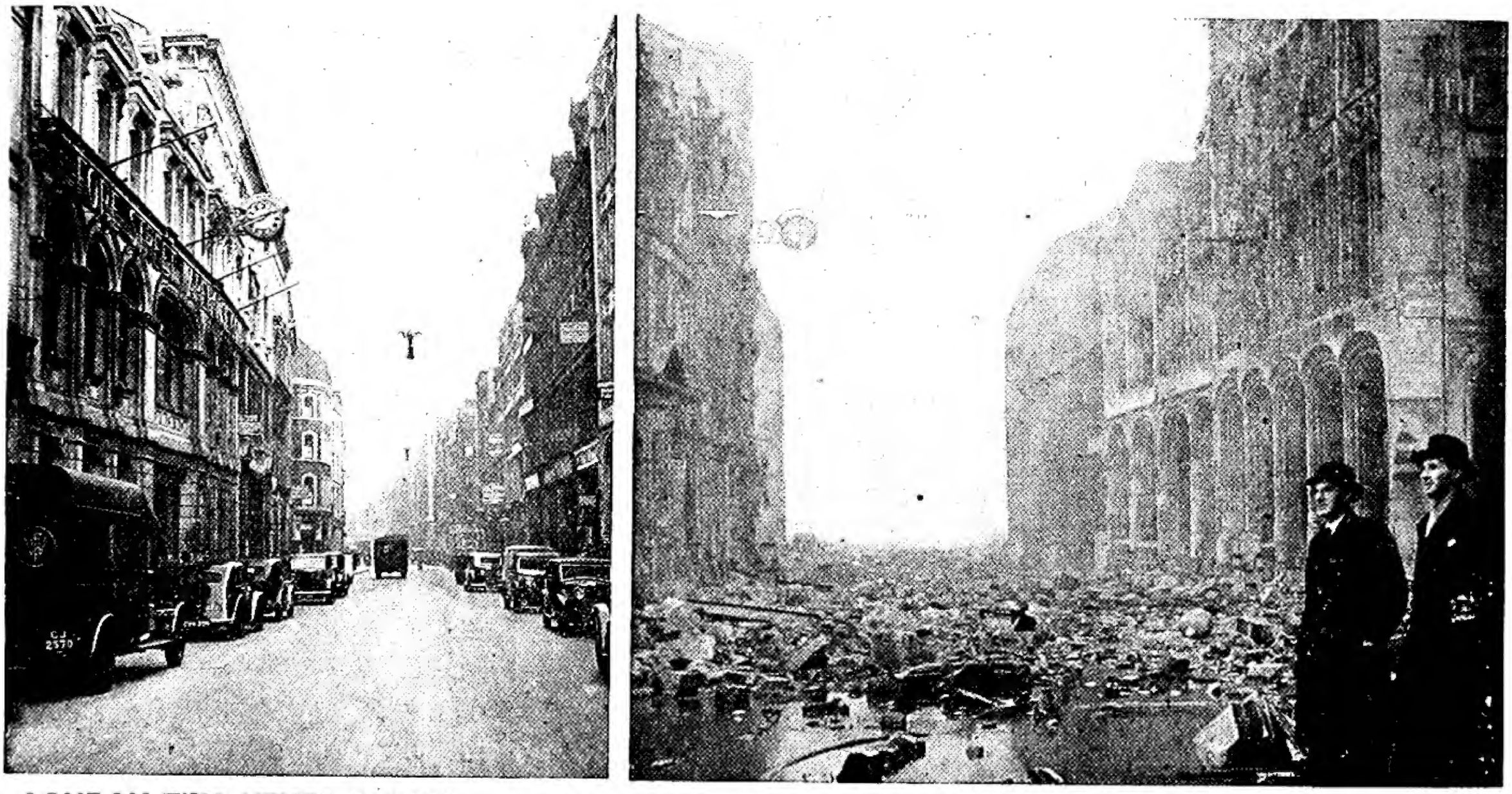
Courtesy of the "Daily Express"



THE CITY CARRIED ON

Scenes after the great fire-raid on London, Dec. 29, 1940. (1) Business men rescue books and documents. (2) A warning about the demolition of dangerous ruins by explosives. Emergency telephone centres (3) were immediately organized, and temporary offices arranged for bombed-out concerns. Notices of changed addresses (5) are seen on a traffic-light post (Fore Street), while in (6) City workers pick their way over fire-hoses. (4) Jack, a famous raven of the London Zoo, stayed near his old home.

Photos, Keystone, Fox; Planet News



LONDON WILL NEVER FORGET

Typical of only too many business thoroughfares on the morrow of the great incendiary raid of December 29, 1940, Fore Street presented a deplorable spectacle. On the left, Fore Street before the raid.

Photos, Fox ; Associated Press

of the bombing of the many towns and cities of Britain in this period cannot yet be compiled. The facts that stood out and that call for record were that, however staggering and even appalling were the first effects of wanton and indiscriminate bombing, it could not be said that at any time or any place the morale of the people had been seriously affected. And since it could also be claimed that the material damage to the war production centres was of a definitely limited character, it could also be stated that the Luftwaffe, despite the ruin and misery they had achieved, had failed in their primary objective.

From the defence point of view it was everywhere agreed that fire-watching and fire-fighting facilities were inadequate—a lesson pressed home with tragic intensity by the Second Great Fire of London, which compelled official action on a much more definite basis.

The fire terror at the end of December made it clear that any system of fire-watching based upon voluntary help must be inadequate. Eighteen days after Mr. Herbert Morrison signed an order which made it compulsory for all persons between 16 and 60, not already engaged in Government, Army or Civil Defence services, to register for fire-watching duties. In the two months November–December, 1940, the total civilian casualties were 19,627, there being 6,202 killed in November and 5,044 in December. The injured numbered 10,790 and 8,837 respectively. Between August 8 and December 31 the total deaths were 20,998.

Targets of Nazi Air Raiders

Destruction and Damage in the Period September 12 to November 14, 1940
London and the Provinces (M.O.I. List)

HOSPITALS

Charterhouse Clinic
Great Ormond Street
London Hospital
Queen Mary's Hospital
St. Bartholomew's Medical School
St. Thomas's
Swiss Relief Centre
St Dunstan's Headquarters
Ford's Hospital, Coventry
American Ambulance Unit, Tunbridge Wells

CHURCHES (London)

Westminster Abbey
St. Paul's Cathedral
St. Martin-in-the-Fields
St. Clement Danes
St. Giles, Cripplegate
St. Swithin's, Cannon Street
St. Augustine, Watling Street
St. Boniface, Adler Street
St. Dunstan-in-the-East
St. Clement's, Eastcheap
Jewin Chapel
Dutch Church, Austin Friars
Swedish Church, Rotherhithe
St. Magnus the Martyr
St. Mary-at-Hill
St. Mary Woolnoth
St. Margaret's, Westminster
Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road
St. John's, Smith Square
St. John's, Kensington
Our Lady of Victories, Kensington
St. Mark's, Regent's Park
Islington Parish Church

EMBASSIES

American (time bomb removed)
Japanese (evacuated)
Spanish

PALACES

Buckingham Palace
Kensington Palace
Lambeth Palace
Eltham Palace

OTHER IMPORTANT BUILDINGS

London

House of Lords
British Museum
Law Courts
Tate Gallery
Imperial War Museum
Somerset House
Wallace Collection
Burlington House
Tower of London
Westminster Hall
Temple
Inner Temple Library
Royal College of Surgeons
Stationers' Hall
Royal Hospital, Chelsea
Hogarth House
Holland House
Radnor House, Twickenham
Statue of Richard Coeur de Lion
Australia House
Bank of England (near)
County Hall
Madame Tussaud's
National City Bank of New York
Public Record Office
South Africa House
University College Library
Yokohama Specie Bank
Y.M.C.A. Headquarters
The Zoo
Indian Students' Hostel
Italian Tourist Company
Wimbledon Centre Court

Provinces

Canterbury Cathedral
Argyle Theatre, Merseyside
Arts Theatre, Birkenhead
Birmingham Art Gallery
Birmingham Town Hall

NEWSPAPER OFFICES (London)

Associated Press of America
Daily Express
Daily Herald
Daily Mail
Daily Mirror
Daily Sketch
Daily Worker
Evening Standard
Glasgow Herald and Bulletin
New Statesman and Nation
The Times

SQUARES AND STREETS (London)

Berkeley Square
Leicester Square
Kensington Square
Sloane Square
Smith Square
Berwick Market
Bond Street
Burlington Arcade
Bruton Street
Carnaby Street
Lambeth Walk
Maddox Street
Oxford Street
Park Lane
Piccadilly
Regent Street
Rotten Row
Royal Arcade
Savile Row
Watling Street
Elephant and Castle

STORES

Austin Reed (Piccadilly)
Bourne and Hollingsworth
Ford Showrooms, Regent Street
Gamage's, Cheapside
John Lewis
Peter Robinson
Selfridge's

CLUBS

Arts (Dover Street)
Carlton
Reform

NOTE.—This list includes only buildings allowed to be mentioned by the censorship.

Chapter 129

GRECO-ITALIAN STRUGGLE: HOW THE GREEKS DROVE OUT THE INVADERS

Italians in Retreat—Fierce Struggle West of Pogradets—Greeks Take Santi Quaranta—Allied Troops Enter Argyrokastro—Masterly Greek Offensive Continues: 'Highest-Spirited Army in the World'—Capture of Himara—Corfu's Ordeal: an Easy Target for Italian Airmen—After Two Months of War: Position at end of 1941

DECEMBER opened blackly enough for the Italians in Albania. Along the whole of the front, from the Adriatic to the tangle of lake and mountain where Albania meets Greece and Yugoslavia, they were in full retreat, closely pursued by the Greeks. Across the rugged and barren countryside and in the bitter weather of the Balkan winter the fighting went on continuously. Particularly deep was the Greeks' penetration into Albania along the coast, where they advanced beyond Santi Quaranta; the Delvino heights were occupied, and Argyrokastro was brought under their artillery fire. The Italian casualties were reported to be heavy, and the Greeks claimed a bag of 7,000 prisoners. Then in the centre Mount Ostravitza was seized, together with the heights north of Premet; and to the north the Greeks extended their hold to the hill country beyond the recently captured Pogradets.

That Greek cavalry had entered Premet was announced by the Greek High Command in a communiqué issued in Athens on December 5. The enemy were stated to have suffered heavy losses, and the Greek captures included 500 prisoners, six guns, and abundant material. At the same time the severe struggle in the mountainous district west of Pogradets was reported to have resulted in complete success. In the air the Greek Air Force continued to be active, and the R.A.F. in Greece claimed some further important successes. It was announced from British headquarters in Athens on December 5 that, in a fierce battle over enemy lines on the previous day, British fighters, without loss to themselves, shot down a large number of enemy aircraft. Enemy troops retreating hurriedly in the Tepeleni-Klisura area were successfully attacked by R.A.F. bomber and fighter formations, while off the coast at Santi Quaranta our bombers secured two direct hits on an enemy destroyer, which was stopped and was seen to be listing heavily when our aircraft left. So badly damaged was it that it had to make for the nearest harbour, that of Santi Quaranta, and there it lay an easy prey for the Greeks when they entered the town a few days later. Describing the attack on Italian concentrations in the Tepeleni area, the leader of the R.A.F. bomber formation said:

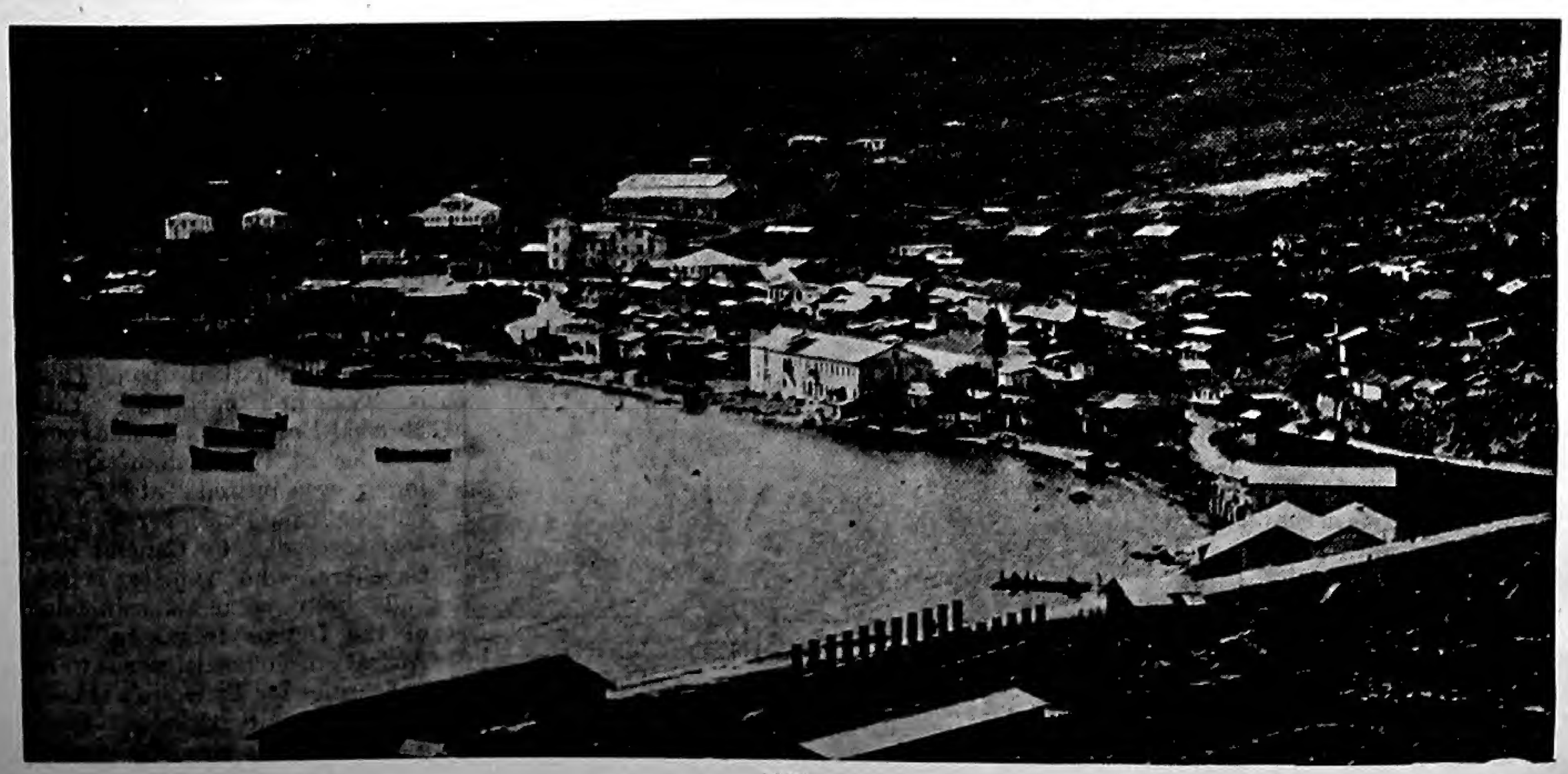
"We dived on the town and saw clouds of dust and stones rise from around the bridge as our bombs dropped. We also hit the road and some buildings, around which we saw scattered motor transport. Seeing a convoy in the road we dropped a stick plumb in the centre of it. Later I saw two Italian bombers apparently attacking the Greek lines, but the bombs burst on the mountainside, evidently doing no damage."

By now the Greeks had closed in on Santi Quaranta—the little port which the Italians had renamed Port Edda, in honour of Mussolini's daughter, Count Ciano's wife, and which, ranking after Valona and Durazzo, had been

ALBANIAN PORT CAPTURED BY THE GREEKS

Santi Quaranta (named by the Italians Port Edda, in honour of Countess Ciano), though quite small, was of considerable importance to the Italians as a base. Storming the heights above, Greek troops took the town on December 6, 1940.

Photo, Bosshard





CAVALRY OF THE 'HIGHEST-SPIRITED ARMY IN THE WORLD'

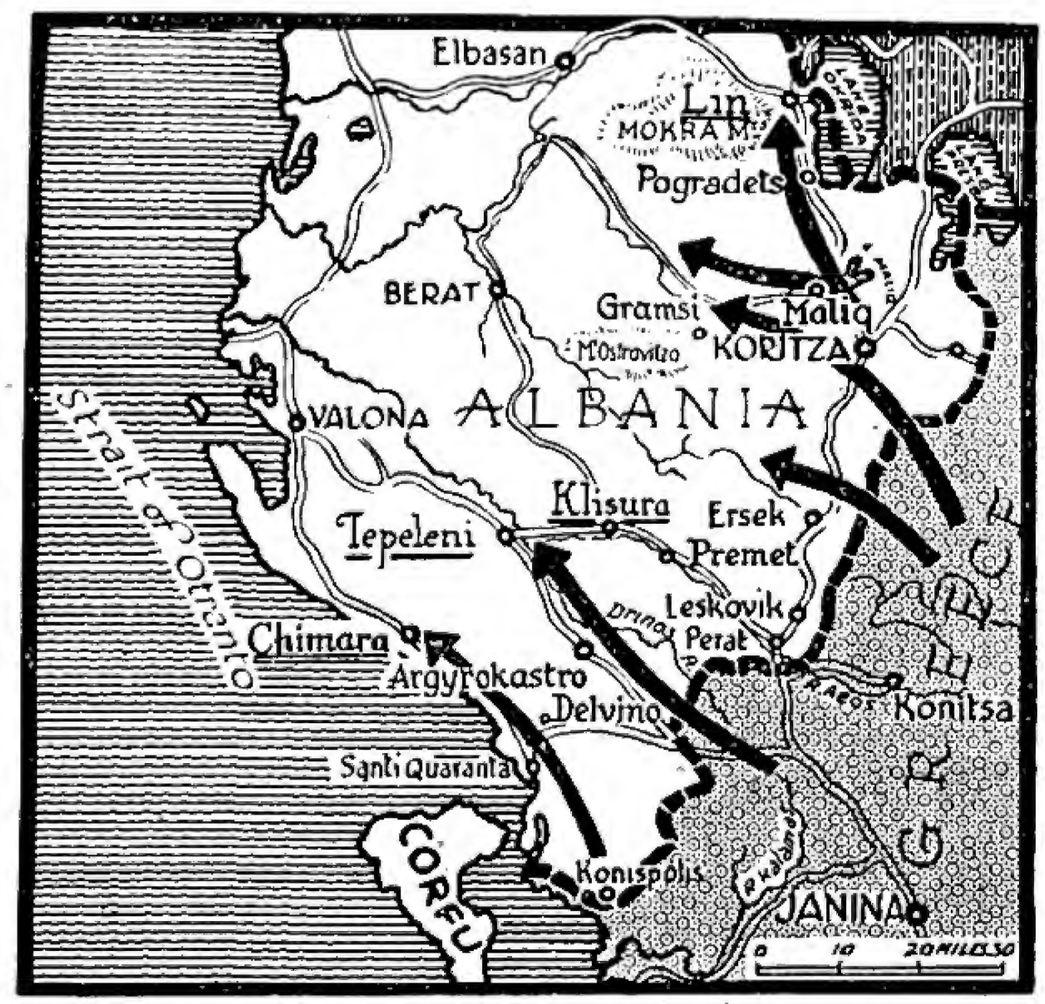
This tribute to Greek troops was uttered by the "Daily Telegraph's" special correspondent with the Greek Army. On December 5, 1940, Greek cavalry such as these (seen riding forward to the Albanian front line) entered Premet, on the heels of the retreating Italians.

Photo, Keystone

used extensively by the Italians as a base for their operations. In the face of terrible fire the Greeks stormed the heights above the town, so that the only way of retreat left for the Italians was along the difficult road to Himara (Chimara). On December 6 came the news that the Greeks had occupied Santi Quaranta, and that the Italians were pouring northward along the coast, choking the roads with their disorderly progress. On the same day it was reported that the Italians had evacuated Argyrokastro, and were retreating towards Tepeleni, constantly harassed by the Greek Air Force. Argyrokastro itself was under Greek artillery fire, and oil dumps and munition depots were reported to be in flames.

No rest was given the defeated and demoralized enemy. The Greeks swept on beyond Santi Quaranta, pressed back the enemy centre, and in the north made further progress beyond Pogradets in the direction of the key-town of Elbasan. And all the time the R.A.F. continued their bombing raids on the Italian communications, Valona with its shipping and dumps of war material in particular being singled out for devastating attack. So severe was the damage at this, Italy's chief "invasion port," that the Italians were henceforward driven to use to an ever-increasing extent the roadstead of San Giovanni di Medua, far to the north, and much less convenient for their purpose.

Still further victories were at hand. At 12.15 on the afternoon of December 8 the Greeks entered Argyrokastro in triumph. There was wild enthusiasm in Athens when the news was announced. Huge crowds paraded the streets and cheered King George and General Metaxas as, with British officers at their side, they appeared on the balcony of the palace. British soldiers, sailors and airmen danced a Highland fling on the stage of a theatre; the church bells crashed out, and the sirens from ships in the Piraeus joined in the joyous clamour.



THE GREEK DRIVE INTO ALBANIA

This map illustrates the operations described in the present Chapter, and shows the main objectives of the Greek advance from the south and south-east.

Courtesy of the "Daily Express"

These Greek successes caused gloom and despondency in Italy, where ruler and people alike had indulged in such high hopes of a campaign which was to be as brief as it was triumphant. Instead, the Italian troops were reported to be retreating everywhere. It was obvious that there were grave defects in the Fascist military machine; it was obvious, too, that Mussolini's High Command had completely under-estimated the scale of the campaign which had been embarked upon. Thus it was not surprising that Marshal Badoglio, supreme commander of the Italian armed forces, was retired "at his own request" on December 6. He was succeeded by General Ugo Cavellero, who shortly before had been commander-in-chief of the Italian forces in East Africa. No official reasons were vouchsafed for Badoglio's retirement, but it was an open secret that he was thoroughly

dissatisfied with the conduct of the war, which, it was generally understood, had been begun against his advice. The bewilderment and depression of the Italian people were still further increased a few days later when Badoglio was followed into retirement by General de Vecchi, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Dodecanese Islands, Admiral Cavagnari, Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice-Admiral Somigli, the Deputy Chief, and Vice-Admiral Bacci, Commander-in-Chief of the Italian naval forces at sea. De Vecchi was succeeded by General Bastico, a veteran of the Spanish and Abyssinian campaigns, while Admiral Riccardi became Chief of the Naval Staff, and Squadron Admiral Iacchino supplanted Bacci. Somigli was replaced by Admiral Campioni. Following these changes a special communiqué was issued in Rome.

"Italy," it stated, "knew she had difficult moments in store when she entered the present war. Those who find in the changes in the High Command dangerous symptoms of lack of harmony and possible delays and forecast catastrophes are wrong. They are committing the same mistakes as were made during the Abyssinian campaign. As for talk of delays, we only say that the changes will have the contrary result and can be considered as accelerating the Italian war machine to a swifter and more efficient rhythm. If the changes are considered necessary and opportune the disciplined Italian people accept them with the trust that makes the Italian people one single block. Mussolini and the Italian people know that they can trust each other."

Greek Drive Continues

Despite storms of wind and rain the Greek offensive continued successfully along the whole front. Particularly fierce was the fighting north and north-west of Argyrokastro in the central sector and near Pogradets, where the Italian rearguard fought desperately to hold off the Greeks, who pursued in the most remorseless fashion. Only in the air was Italy able to claim some small triumph, as when her 'planes bombed the defenceless civilians of Corfu. But the R.A.F. retaliated with bombing raids on Valona and Durazzo, while Italian shipping in the Adriatic and the Mediterranean was forced to run the gauntlet.

"Our offensive continues successfully throughout the whole front," read the Greek High Command communiqué issued in Athens on December 11. "Strong positions were captured at the point of the bayonet. The enemy's losses were heavy. Three 10 cm. guns were captured." This communiqué is typical of the reports issued by the Greek Command in those days of stress

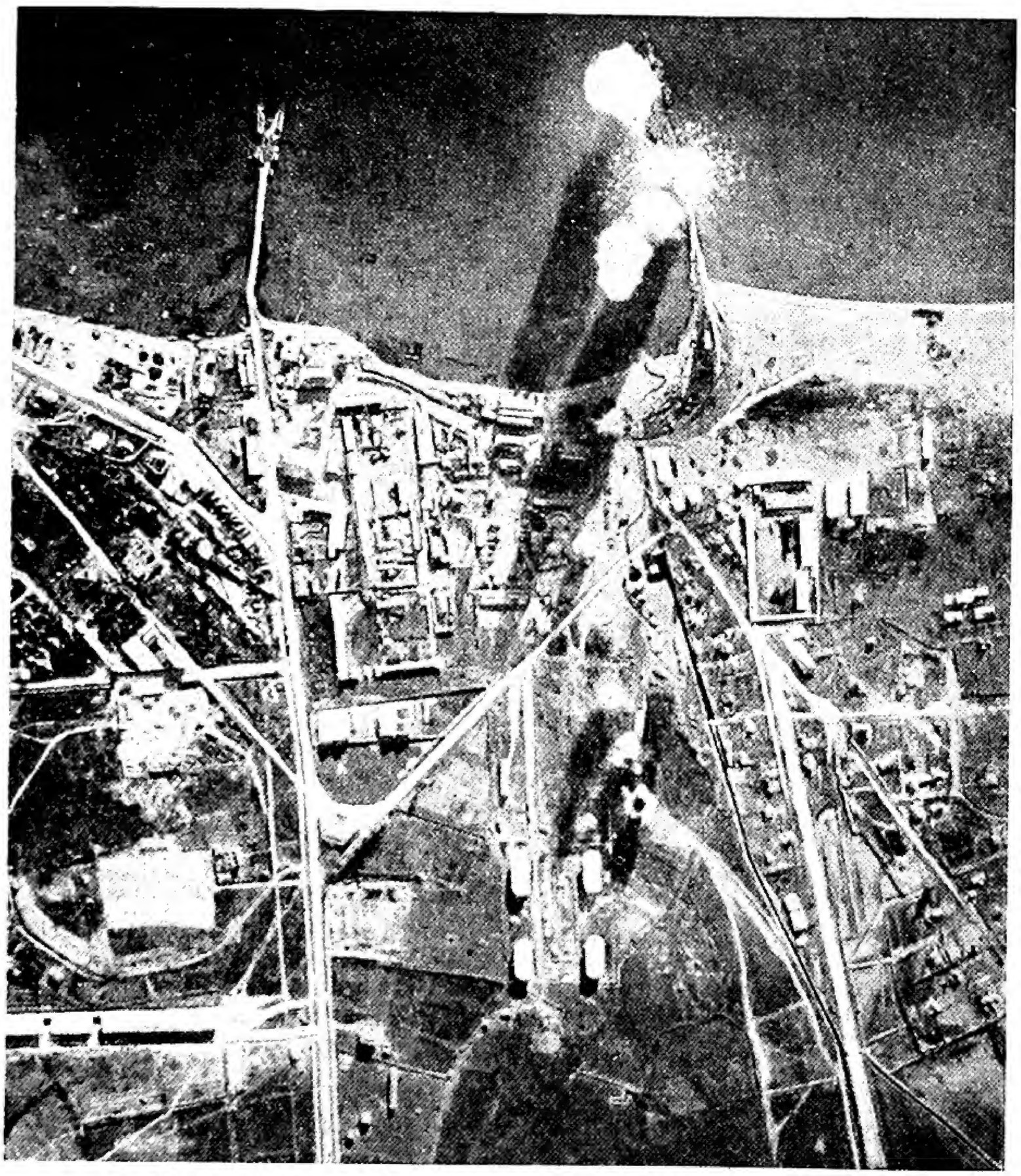




ARGYROKASTRO FELL TO THE GREEKS AFTER DESPERATE FIGHTING

When Greek troops entered Argyrokastro on December 8, 1940, they viewed a scene of desolation. Apart from the effect of their own shells, the town had been battered by the Royal Air Force in the process of dislodging the Italians. Top, Greeks occupying the former barracks of the Italian Carabinieri at Maliq, 8 miles N.W. of Koritza. Koritza itself was taken on November 22.

Photos, Bosshard ; Associated Press



HOW THE ROYAL AIR FORCE AIDED THE GREEKS

The landing of Italian reinforcements and supplies was much impeded by the bombing attacks made by the R.A.F. Here is a view of the Albanian port of Valona, showing British bombs falling on important objectives with astounding accuracy of aim.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

and strain. In spite of the bitter winter weather—snow was now falling generally throughout Albania, and on the mountains it lay several feet deep, while villages were barely distinguishable under their mantle of snow—the Greek forces maintained their offensive. Day after day the communiqués spoke of offensive operations continuing successfully, of advances at this point and at that, of the capture of important heights and the occupation of still more towns and villages.

By now the Greeks had developed to a fine art their tactics of the offensive—tactics which proved as successful as economical in man-power. Usually they refrained from making a frontal assault, but gradually worked round on either side of the villages or towns which were their objectives until they had occupied the dominating heights and so compelled the Italians down below in the valleys to choose between extermination or evacuation. Again and again these tactics proved their soundness, and from place after place the Italians streamed away north and west, leaving behind them quantities of war material which they had not time to destroy.

In vain the enemy attempted to consolidate his position. The Greeks pushed on, never giving him an opportunity of constructing a really effective system of field works and fortifications. The cold was extreme; dense mist hampered the use of aircraft, and the deep snowdrifts made it next to impossible to drag the heavy guns across the mountains. So severe was the weather that it was said that the wolves had been driven from the mountain heights to seek the comparative shelter of the valleys, where they were often encountered loping along the tracks. In such conditions the highly mechanized Italian army was at a serious disadvantage, compared with the Greeks whose transport was drawn almost entirely by horses and mules. All the same, the Greeks were severely tried by the bitter conditions. Their equipment left much to be desired, and although they were swift to profit by the enormous captures of Italian war material and were as quick to use the Italian lorries as they were to turn round the Italian guns and tanks, their plight was pitiable in the terrible conditions that prevailed. Numbers of the men were without even a single blanket, as 200,000 blankets had been destroyed by a fire in Athens on the eve of the war; many more had to share a blanket with a comrade. Their boots, too, were in a shocking state after weeks of marching and clambering about the rocks. As one Greek corps commander put it, "If my men are able to do so much with so little essential clothing, how much more could be done if they were more adequately provided!"

Greek Fortitude

A vivid picture of the Greeks in the fighting line was drawn by Mr. Arthur Merton of the "Daily Telegraph," who on his way across the mountains passed endless convoys carrying supplies to the front line.

"Their covered wagons or open carts on which the drivers huddled under pieces of canvas," he wrote, "trying to protect themselves from the driving rain and wind, were drawn by sturdy little horses or mules. Cheerfulness was the characteristic of all these wayfarers. There were always greetings for us. Through thick, slippery mire which hindered every step they ploughed their way." On a summit of some 6,000 feet, where conditions were truly Arctic, old men and women and even little children were picking up stone and slate from the hillside and carrying it to the road to make it passable for wheeled transport. "Equally pathetic, but inspiring, was the sight of those thousands of horses and mules, drenched and shivering with cold, but struggling to bear the loads which are their contribution to their masters' success in the battle."

The Greeks did, indeed, make a magnificent showing.

"Surely this Greek Army today," said Mr. Leland Stowe, the "Daily Telegraph's" Special Correspondent with the Greek Army, "is just about the highest-spirited army in the world. Regardless of mud, rain and snow, regardless of hundreds of gorges, precipices and snow-covered peaks which must be conquered, day after day they march on." Their appearance, he discovered, was entirely deceptive, for they are little fellows, not averaging much more than 5 ft. 5 in. in height, and most of them look as if their uniforms are one or two sizes too big for them. To hear their animated chatter one might suspect them to be almost incapable of a well-organized effort. Yet, in fact,



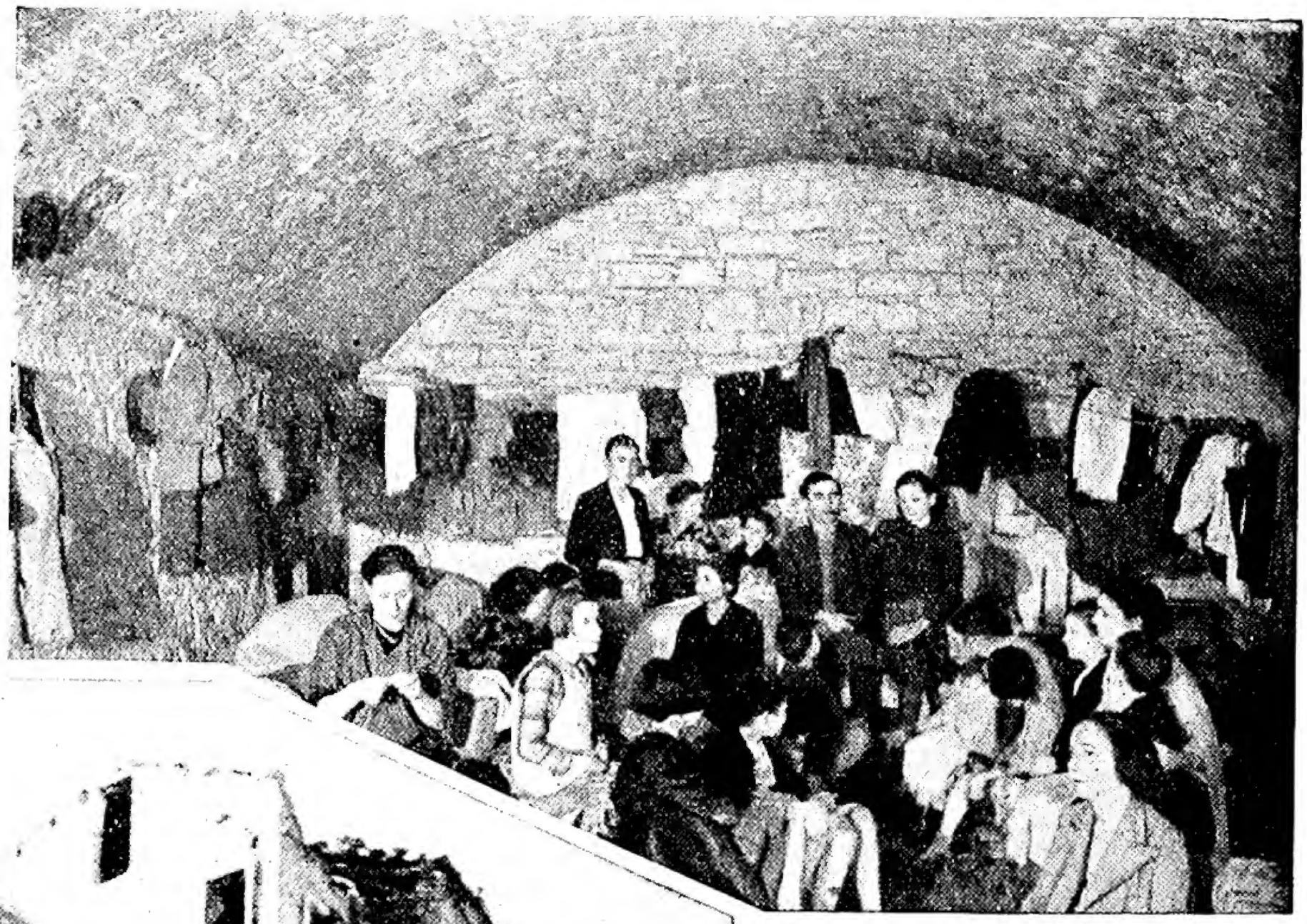
GREECE, TRIUMPHANT, OFFERS THANKS FOR VICTORIES

On the Greek battleship 'Averoff' a service of thanksgiving was held when news of their country's resounding victories over the Italian invaders was received. Below, in Athens they celebrate the fall of Koritza, captured on November 22. Left, a patriotic poster; inscription reads: 'They can fight on undisturbed because they know that the E.O.N.—National Youth Organization—takes care of their families.'

Photos, Keystone; Black Star; G.P.U.

these "iron-muscled, warm-hearted men, these humble, unassuming sons of Greece," were extraordinarily efficient. "After a night of forced marches," continued the famous American journalist, "over killing mountain roads, it is a common thing for Greek soldiers to shout and cheer as you pass them. Plugging slowly along through rain on mule-back, Greeks will yell 'Macaronis!' and gesticulate eloquently to indicate what they will do to the Italians when they catch up with them. Their gestures are masterpieces of mimicry, and are always accompanied by diabolical but good-natured grins."

The Italian communiqués at this time were as





CORFU WAS AN EASY TARGET

Barely an hour's flight from Italian air bases in Sicily, the Greek island of Corfu was frequently bombed by the Regia Aeronautica. Much damage was done and many were killed. In the underground chambers of the old Venetian fort some thousands of bombed refugees found shelter. Below, buildings demolished by enemy bombs.
Photo, Black Star

brief as the Greek, though occasionally they contained significant admissions. Thus that issued by the High Command on Dec. 16 stated that "on the Greek front new enemy attacks were repulsed. During the fierce fighting the losses suffered by the enemy and ourselves were appreciable." That the Italian losses were heavy was borne out by the statements of prisoners taken, and by Greek officers. One Greek observer watched an Alpini division make five attempts to recapture the hill of Skiovik; "the way the Italian commanders threw their men into the shambles," he said, "was pitiful. It was a useless slaughter to justify a subsequent retreat."

Another Italian force that was badly cut up was the Modena division, when it delivered an unsuccessful counter-attack to the west of the River Drjnos. A naval communiqué stated that a Greek destroyer flotilla, under the command of Admiral Cavvadias, penetrated far beyond the island of Saseno on the night of December 15–16, but without encountering the enemy.

Again the church bells in Athens pealed and the crowds rejoiced when,



Photo, Keystone

LONDON CITY SCARRED BY THE NAZI FIRE RAID

This photograph, taken from St. Paul's Cathedral, shows the ruined church and spire of St. Mary-le-Bow (3). Behind (4) is the Bank of England, and to the right (5) the Mansion House. Some of the principal streets are indicated : (1) Gresham Street ; (2) King Street, Cheapside ; (6) Bow Lane ; (7) Milk Street ; (8) Cheapside ; (9) Bread Street. St. Mary-le-Bow was notable for its fine lantern and spire, only four feet lower than that of St. Bride's, while, of course, it was endeared to all Londoners as the home of Bow Bells. The scene of wanton ruin here spread out before the eyes is beyond comment, but represents only a portion of that caused by the raid.



Photos, "Daily Mirror"; Planet News

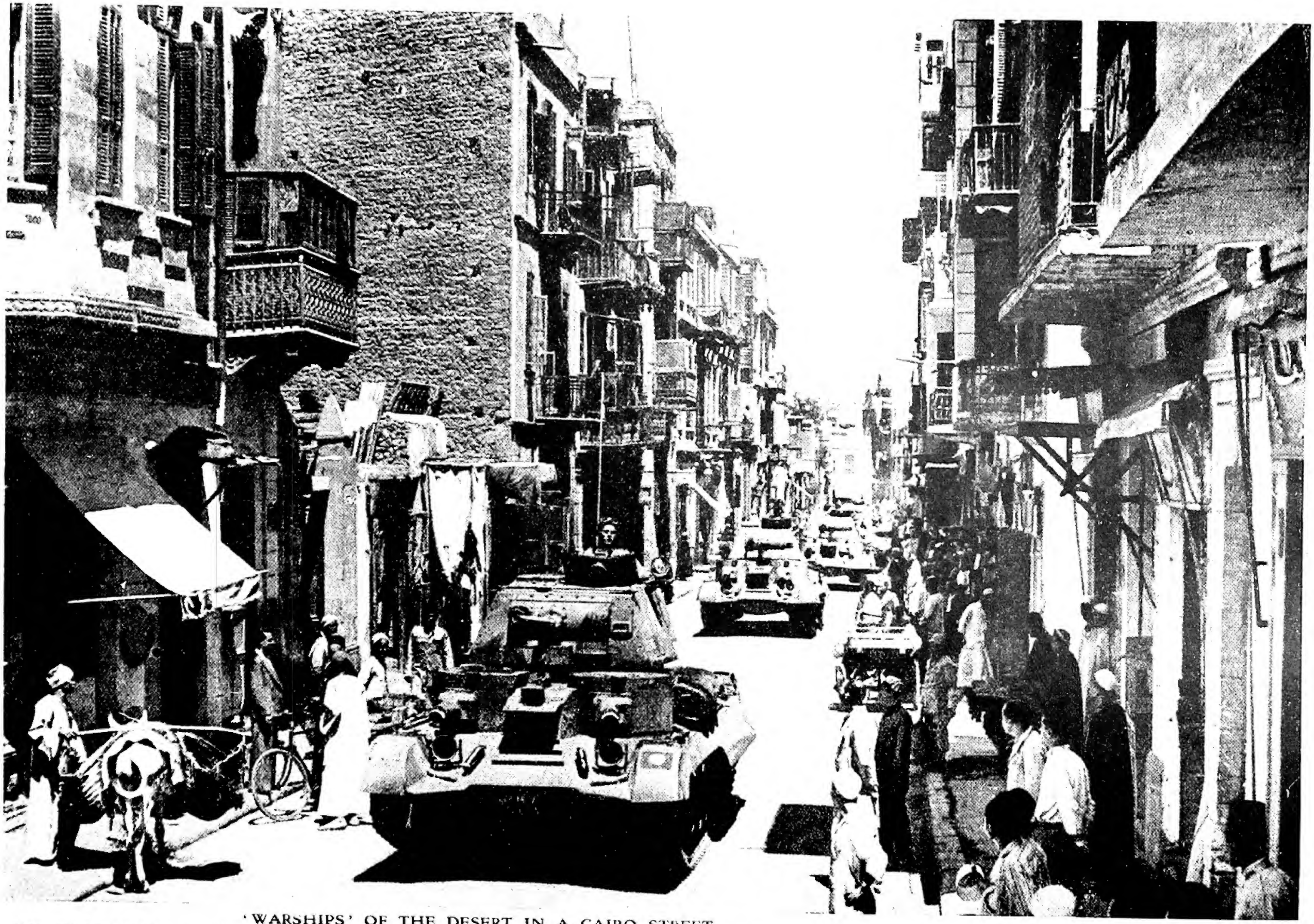
FIRE HAVOC AROUND ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

Both these photographs were taken from the roof of St. Paul's. The upper one vividly shows the fierce fires that raged only a stone's throw from the famous Cathedral on the night of December 29, 1940, and were held in check by the almost superhuman efforts of the City and Metropolitan firemen, regular and auxiliary, working under a rain of bombs. Below, with smoke and steam still rising, are some of the famous streets and buildings that nestled around the Cathedral: (1) Warwick Lane; (2) Paternoster Square; (3) Paternoster Row; (4) Ivy Lane; (5) General Post Office; (6) Newgate Street; (7) Christ Church, associated with the Bluecoat School and built by Wren in 1687–1704

ITALIAN ARTILLERY RETREATING IN ALBANIA

Impeded by deep snow, intense cold and poor mountain roads, these Italian soldiers are hauling their gun to a new position. Strapped to their backs are snow-shoes. In some places the snow was three feet deep, and, only narrow tracks being available, the Italian artillery had to depend upon man-power to move their weapons from place to place. Beneath : a wintry fairyland effect, suggestive of seasonable peace but for the lonely Greek warrior with a pack-horse making his way to camp. By the end of 1940, after two months of war, more than a quarter of Albanian territory had been captured by the valiant Greek armies.

Photos, Keystone : Bosshard



'WARSHIPS' OF THE DESERT IN A CAIRO STREET

The appearance of tanks in a narrow Cairo street on their way to the Western Desert reminds the Egyptians of the protective power of Britain. Cairo, the Nile and the Suez Canal had long been Axis objectives, and Mussolini imagined that his Libyan armies would soon be in possession of these important strategic points. By the end of December, 1940, British troops had penetrated 70 miles inside the Libyan frontier and concentrations were beginning to encircle Tobruk. Many Italian aerodromes had been abandoned.

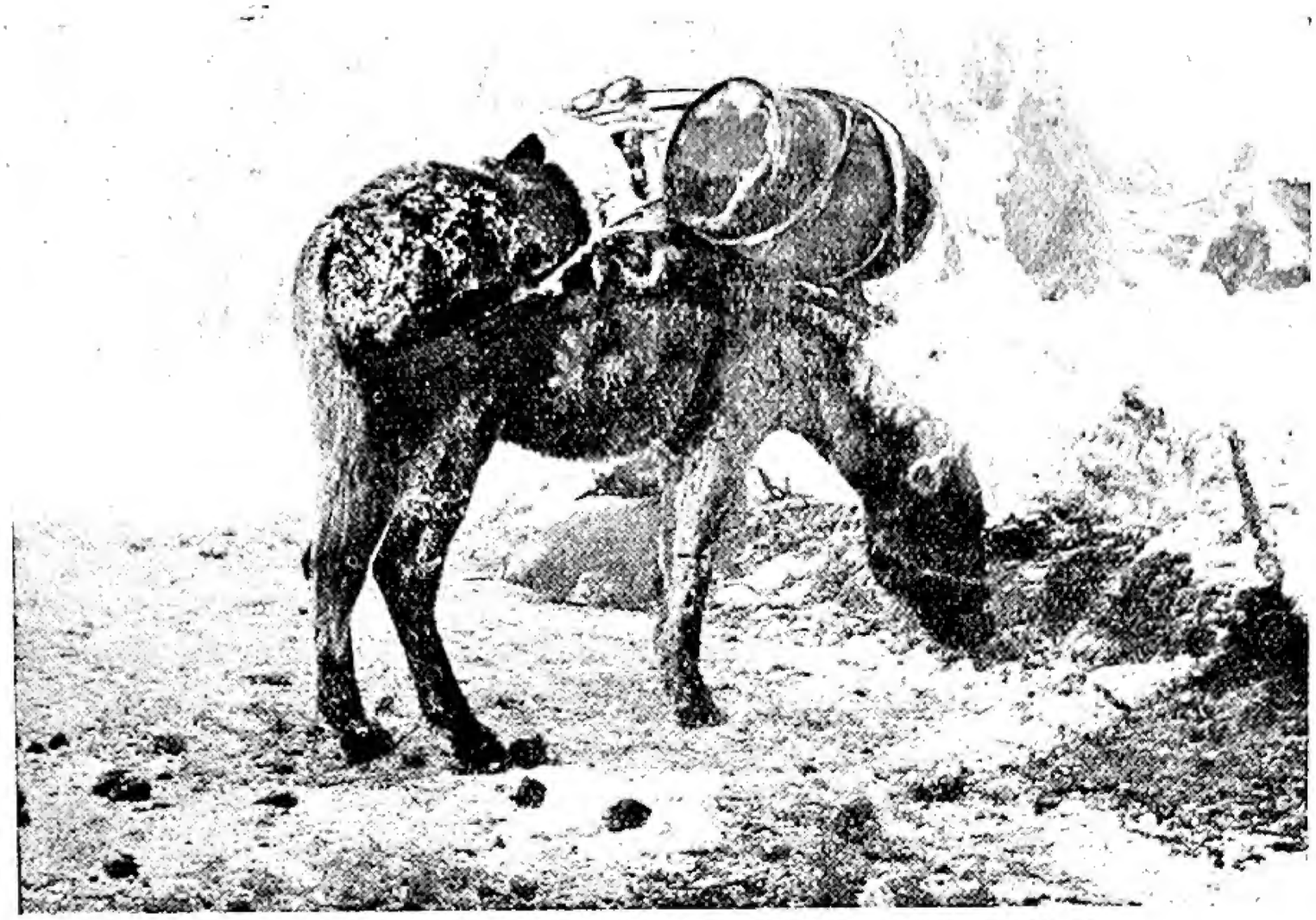
Photo, Keystone

on December 23, General Metaxas gave out the news that Himara on the Adriatic coast road to Valona had been occupied by the Greek troops. The Greek Premier also announced that the entire 153rd Blackshirt regiment, consisting of 30 officers and 800 men, had been captured, with all its equipment and material.

On the same day came the news of a striking R.A.F. triumph in the air. On December 21 nine British fighters, it was announced, had engaged 50 Italian machines over Argyrokastro and with a loss of two had shot down eight for certain and probably three more. At the same time, Air Vice-Marshal D'Albiac stated that the R.A.F. in Greece had already destroyed 39 Italian 'planes in the Balkan war zone, while another 12 were "probables," as against only 9 British lost. Valona had been raided 18 times and Durazzo eight times.

On Christmas Day some British 'planes dropped bundles of leather jerkins on the town of Corfu, which had been heavily bombed by the Italians. This Christmas gift was extremely seasonable and welcome, since many of the inhabitants had lost their homes and were now living in caves in the hillsides. The pilots flew so low that the crew of one machine was able to make out an old lady who came to the door of her cottage and with vigorous gestures asked that a bundle should be dropped on her doorstep. Very different was the Italians' attitude towards the season of peace and goodwill. They chose to mark the day by a fresh bombing of the island, as the result of which 21 women and children were killed and 31 more wounded. Boys and girls of the Greek youth organization, helping to dig the injured and dying out of the ruins, sang as they worked to keep up the courage of those entombed.

So the year drew to its end. After two months of war, so far from the Italians being in Athens and Salonika, as they had hoped, the Greeks occupied more than a quarter of Albania. Everywhere and every day they had demonstrated their superiority, if not in equipment, at least in spirit. With quiet confidence they looked forward to what the New Year would bring.



CRUEL CONDITIONS FOR ANIMAL TRANSPORT

So severe were the terrain and weather during the campaign in Albania that both sides relied largely upon mules or ponies for transport. Here, an ice-encrusted pony is searching for grass. In the background the frosty trees and the snow-covered tents of the soldiers are eloquent of this desolate theatre of war.

Photo, Bosshard



CHRISTMAS IN HOSPITAL AT KORITZA

Greek soldiers under the care of the Red Cross in the Albanian town of Koritza near the Yugoslav frontier. A Christmas tree adorning every ward brought a touch of homely symbolism to these victims of the Italian invader.

Photo, Bosshard

Historic Documents. CXCV

'ONE MAN AND ONE MAN ONLY'

On December 23, 1940, Mr. Churchill broadcast to the Italian people, telling them of his appeal for peace seven months earlier, and of Mussolini's criminal folly in rejecting it. His speech was relayed throughout the Empire, and a translation in Italian was also broadcast.

TONIGHT I speak to the Italian people and I speak to you from London, the heart of the British Islands and of the British Commonwealth and Empire. I speak to you what the diplomatists call words of great truth and respect. We are at war—that is a very strange and terrible thought: Whoever imagined until the last few melancholy years that the British and Italian nations would be trying to destroy one another?

We have never been your foes till now. In the last war against the barbarous Huns we were your comrades. For fifteen years after that war we were your friends Although the institutions which you adopted after that war were not akin to ours, and diverged, as we think, from the sovereign impulses which had commanded the unity of Italy, we could still walk together in peace and good will. . . .

And now we are at war; now we are condemned to work each other's ruin. Your aviators have tried to cast their bombs upon London; our armies are tearing and will tear your African Empire to shreds and tatters. We are only now at the beginning of this sombre tale. Who can say where it will end? Presently we shall be forced to much closer grips. How has all this come about?

Italians, I will tell you the truth. It is all because of one man. One man and one man alone has ranged the Italian people in deadly struggle against the British Empire, and has deprived Italy of the sympathy and intimacy of the United States of America. That he is a great man I do not deny, but that after eighteen years of unbridled power he has led your country to the horrid verge of ruin cannot be denied.

There lies the tragedy of Italian history and there stands the criminal who has wrought the deed of folly and of shame.

Abyssinian Quarrel the Excuse for Aggression

WHAT is the defence that is put forward for his action? It is, of course, the quarrel about sanctions and Abyssinia. . . . . But what is the proportion of this Abyssinian dispute, arising out of the Covenant of the League of Nations, to which we had both pledged our word, compared with the death-grapple in which Italy and Britain have now been engaged? I declare—and my words will go far—that nothing that happened in that Abyssinian quarrel can account for or justify the deadly strife which has now broken out between us.

Then the great war between the British and French democracies and Prussian militarism or Nazi overlordship began again. Where was the need for Italy to intervene? Where was the need to strike at prostrate France? Where was the need to declare war on Britain? Where was the need to invade Egypt, which is under British protection? We were content with Italian neutrality. During the first eight months of the war we paid great deference to Italian interests. But this was all put down to fear. We were told we were effete, worn out, and old chatterbox people mouthing outworn shibboleths of nineteenth-century Liberalism. But it was not due to fear. It was not due to weakness.

The French Republic for the moment is stunned. France will rise again, but the British nation and Commonwealth of Nations across the globe, and, indeed, I may say the English-speaking world, are now aroused. They are on the march or on the move, and all the forces of modern progress and of ancient culture are ranged behind them.

Why have you placed yourselves, who were our friends and might have been our brothers, in the path of this avalanche, now only just started from its base to roll forward on its predestined track? Why, after all this, were you made to attack and invade Greece? I ask why—but you may ask why, too, for you were never consulted. The people of Italy were never consulted; the army of Italy was never consulted. No one was consulted. One man and one man alone ordered Italian soldiers to ravage their neighbour's vineyard. Surely the time has come when the Italian monarchy and people, who guard the sacred centre of Christendom, should have a word to say upon these awe-inspiring issues? Surely the Italian army which has fought so bravely on many occasions in the past, but now evidently has no heart for the job, should take some care of the life and future of Italy?

I can only tell you that I, Churchill, have done my best to prevent this war between Italy and the British Empire, and to prove my words I will read you the message which I sent to Signor Mussolini in the fateful days before it began. Cast your minds back to May 16 of this year. The French front had been broken, the French army was not yet defeated, the great battle of France was still raging. Here is the message which I sent to Signor Mussolini:

> Now that I have taken up my office as Prime Minister and Minister of Defence I look back to our meetings in Rome and feel a desire to speak words of good will to you as chief of the Italian nation across what seems to be a swiftly widening gulf. Is it too late to stop a river of blood from flowing between the British and Italian peoples? We can, no doubt, inflict grievous injuries upon one another and maul each other cruelly and darken the Mediterranean with our strife. If you so decree, it must be so; but I declare that I have never been the enemy of Italian greatness nor ever at heart the foe of the Italian law-giver. It is idle to predict the course of the great battles now raging in Europe, but I am sure that, whatever may happen on the Continent, England will go on to the end, even quite alone, as we have done before, and I believe with some assurance that we shall be aided, in increasing measure, by the United States and, indeed, by all the Americas.
>
> I beg you to believe that it is in no spirit of weakness or of fear that I make this solemn appeal which will remain on record. Down the ages above all other calls comes the cry that the joint heirs of Latin and Christian civilization must not be ranged against one another in mortal strife. Hearken to it, I beseech you in all honour and respect, before the dread signal is given. It will never be given by us

And this is the reply which I received upon the 18th:

> I reply to the message which you have sent me in order to tell you that you are certainly aware of grave reasons of an historical and contingent character which have ranged our two countries in opposite camps. Without going back very far in time I remind you of the initiative taken in 1935 by your Government to organize at Geneva Sanctions against Italy in securing for herself a small space in the African sun without causing the slightest injury to your interests and territories or those of others. I remind you also of the real and active state of servitude in which Italy finds herself in her own sea. If it was to honour your signature that your Government declared war on Germany, you will understand that the same sense of honour and of respect for engagements assumed in the Italian-German treaty guides Italian policy today and tomorrow in the face of any event whatsoever.

That was the answer. I make no comment upon it. It was a dusty answer. It speaks for itself. Anyone can see who it was that wanted peace, and who it was that meant to have war. One man and one man only was resolved to plunge Italy after all these years of strain and effort into the whirlpool of war.

Italy at the Cross Roads

AND what is the position of Italy today? Where is it that the Duce has led his trusting people after eighteen years of dictatorial power? What hard choice is open to them now? It is to stand up to the battery of the whole British Empire on the sea, in the air, and in Africa, and the vigorous counter-attack of the Greek nation; or, on the other hand, to call in Attila over the Brenner Pass with his hordes of ravenous soldiery and his gangs of Gestapo policemen to occupy, hold down, and protect the Italian people, for whom he and his Nazi followers cherish the most bitter and outspoken contempt that is on record between races.

There is where one man and one man only has led you; and there I leave this unfolding story until the day comes—as come it will—when the Italian nation will once more take a hand in shaping its own fortunes.

Chapter 130

MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE LIBYAN CAMPAIGN

British Naval Bases : Effect of Increasing Air Power—Italy's Geographical Advantages—Her Expanding Colonial Policy—Desert Barriers Lose Their Strength—Piling Up a Menacing Army in Libya—Italy's Nuisance Value as a Non-Belligerent—She Enters the War—Position After the French Débâcle—British Forces in Middle East—Graziani's Libyan Army

BEFORE the advent of the submarine and the developments of aviation in recent years, Britain's strategic hold on the Mediterranean was immensely strong, so long as we possessed an adequate Navy. Gibraltar and Malta provided bases for the Fleet, and a comparatively small army sufficed to ensure the safety of the Suez Canal. Sea power enabled us to reinforce our Mediterranean garrisons at will, and Egypt was well protected from invasion by armies of marching men who would be encumbered with animal transport, for to them the Sinai desert on one side and, to a greater extent, the Western and Libyan deserts on the other were almost impassable obstacles.

The appearance of German submarines in the Mediterranean in the First Great War, and the toll they took of our shipping, gave the first indication that our strategic position was deteriorating. It was also realized that, with the increased range of modern guns, the fortress of Gibraltar, while retaining its impregnability, could no longer be looked on in all circumstances as a safe naval base. Malta, for this reason, as well as from its central position, became all the more important to the Navy.

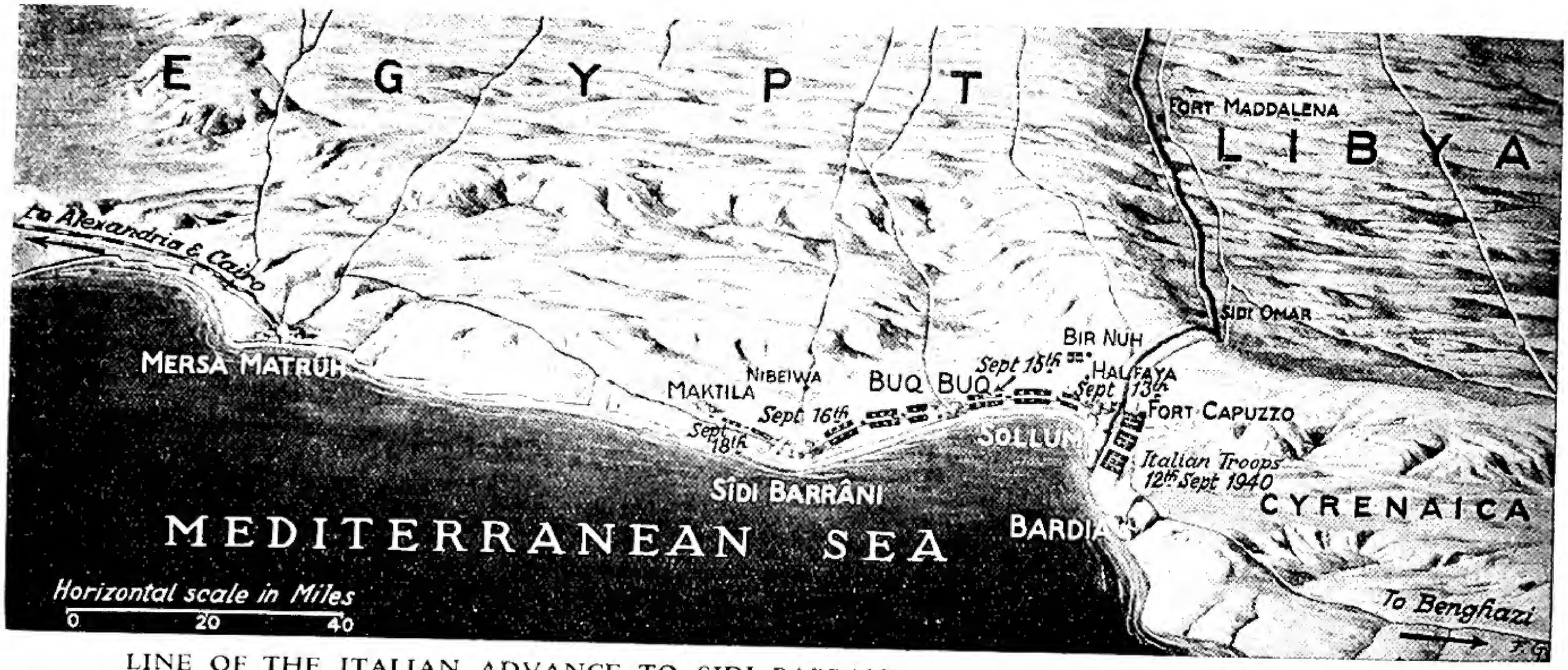
It was not, however, till aviation attained its modern power that the situation gave cause for serious anxiety and, in particular, directed attention to the strategic advantages it gave Italy. Her aircraft, operating from shore bases, could combine with submarines and surface vessels to render passage through the Sicilian Channel and adjacent waters dangerous, almost to a prohibitive degree, for all except warships ; and Malta itself might become unusable as a base for the British Fleet.

Mussolini was not slow to exploit the inherent advantages of Italy's geographical position. While Britain was still committed to a policy of unilateral disarmament he expanded his army, developed a powerful air force, and embarked on an ambitious programme of naval construction in which a high proportion of submarines and fast torpedo craft were included. In the design of cruisers and battleships speed was given first place, making them particularly capable of employing evasive and harassing tactics. But, trusting to the cooperation of shore-based aircraft, no aircraft carriers were included in the naval programme, an

MERSA MATRUH, STRONG POINT IN DEFENCE OF EGYPT

General view of Mersa Matruh seen from the hills to the south of the town, with a military camp in the foreground and the sea in the distance. It was here, where the railway from Alexandria ended, that General Wavell concentrated his forces and prepared to attack the Italians advancing along the coast road from Libya, the British general having first sent out small infantry posts and mechanized cavalry and artillery to harass the Italians.





LINE OF THE ITALIAN ADVANCE TO SIDI BARRANI

Map showing the relative positions of Italian Libya and Egypt with the coastal places involved in the fighting between the British and Imperial forces and the Italian armies as described in this Chapter. By September 16, 1940, the Fascist legions had advanced into Egypt as far as Sidi Barrani, but our troops attacked on December 9 with such vigour and skill that Sidi Barrani and many thousands of Italian prisoners were in our hands by the 12th. At the end of the year operations against Bardia were in successful progress.

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*

omission which was to cost Italy dear. Combined with his military policy Mussolini entered on one of colonial expansion, which culminated in his Abyssinian adventure. Prior to that he had fortified and strongly garrisoned the Dodecanese Islands and had begun to expend vast sum on Libya. There, although the methods employed in subduing native resistance were barbarous, many legitimate enterprises were started, such as the development of roads and water supplies and the establishment of agricultural settlements. Yet all these enterprises had a strategic significance, especially the construction of a great motor road skirting the coast for over 1,100 miles from the Tunisian to the Egyptian frontiers. Libya had in fact become a potential base for operations either against Tunis or Egypt.

When, therefore, it was found that Italy was maintaining in Libya a powerful army (far exceeding what was required for internal security and including strong mechanized components), the interests of both Britain and France were obviously threatened. Egypt was especially concerned, for, in completing the subjugation of Libya, Italy had successfully employed a mechanized column to cross a formerly impassable desert in order to capture the headquarters of the Senussi sect at the Kufra oasis. This raised the question whether the desert still afforded Egypt complete protection from invasion by land from the west.

Such was the general strategic situation in the Mediterranean when the outbreak of war in 1939 found Italy, though a non-belligerent, in close alliance with Germany. Counter-measures to offset the potential hostility of Italy were necessary. France strengthened her Tunisian defences, and the reinforced French and British forces in Syria, Palestine and Egypt were placed under General Weygand. The British and French Mediterranean Fleets came under the control of the British Admiralty and used Alexandria as their main base in the Eastern Mediterranean.



MARSHAL GRAZIANI

On July 1, 1940, Marshal Graziani took command of the Italian armies in Libya in succession to Marshal Balbo, killed in an aeroplane crash on June 28. (See p. 1134.) Graziani invaded Egypt on September 13. The British and Imperial troops waited till December 9, and then advanced, attacking first at Nibeiwa.

Photo, Associated Press

By compelling the Allies to keep such large detachments standing idle Mussolini was obviously rendering valuable assistance to Germany. But he had good reasons for not committing himself further, for his navy was no match for the combined Franco-British fleet, and his colonial possessions were hostages to fortune. Moreover, the Italian people were war-weary, and the financial resources of their country had been reduced by war and by colonial extravagances; consequently, much military equipment which was becoming obsolete could not be renewed. Depending for many things on overseas supplies, Italy was in no condition to embark on a long war or to resist the pressure of blockade; but, on the other hand, while she remained non-belligerent she provided a loophole in the blockade which was of value to Germany.

Mussolini Declares War

When the collapse of France seemed imminent, in June, 1940, it appeared to offer Mussolini—who may have doubted the practical value of his partner's gratitude—a chance to stake his claims in a short and easy war. On June 10 he declared war against Britain and France.

With Britain's position desperately worsened by France's default, Italy now had wonderful opportunities. Having no danger on the Tunisian front, the whole of the Libyan army, estimated to consist of over 250,000 men, could concentrate against the comparatively





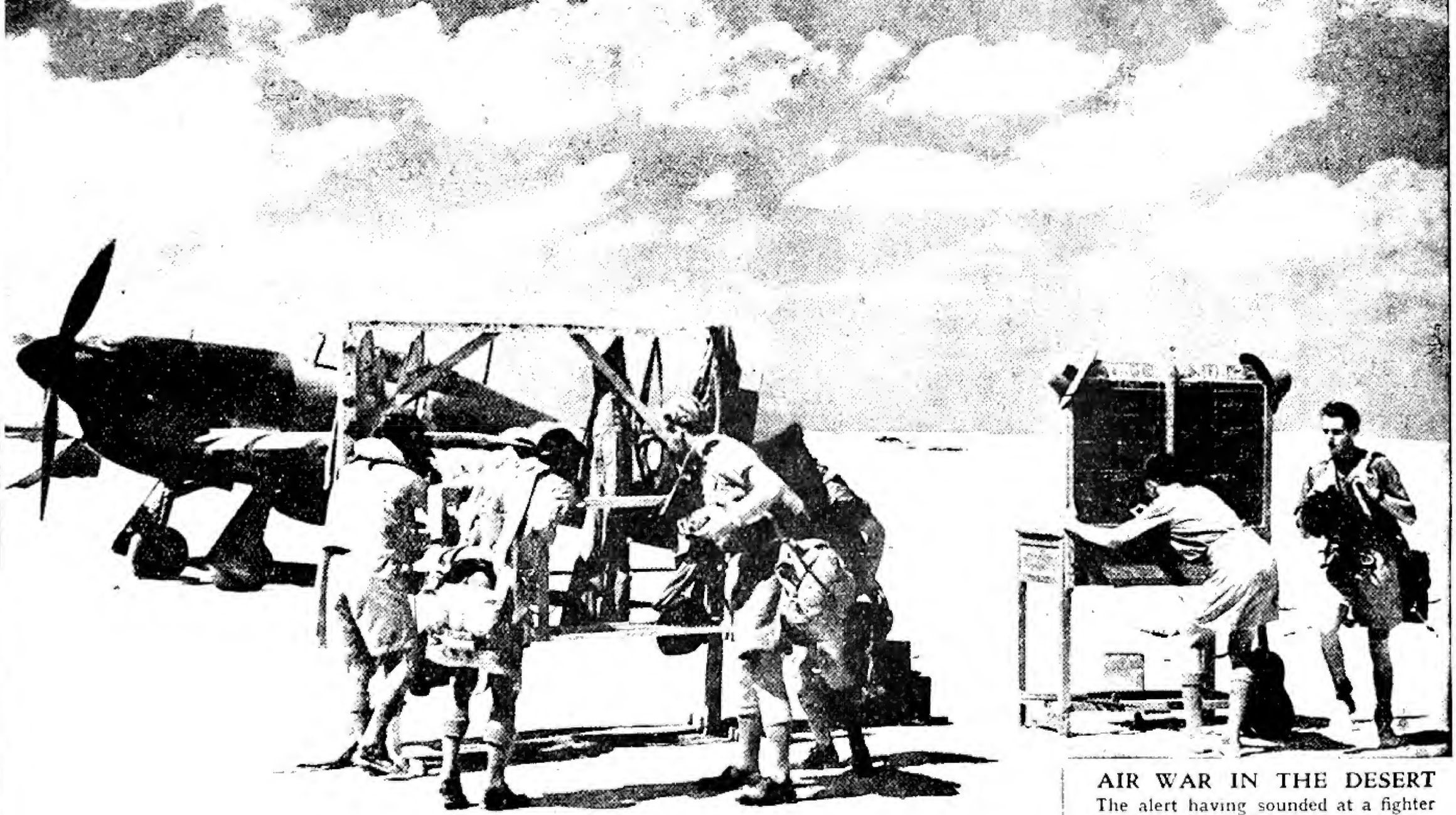


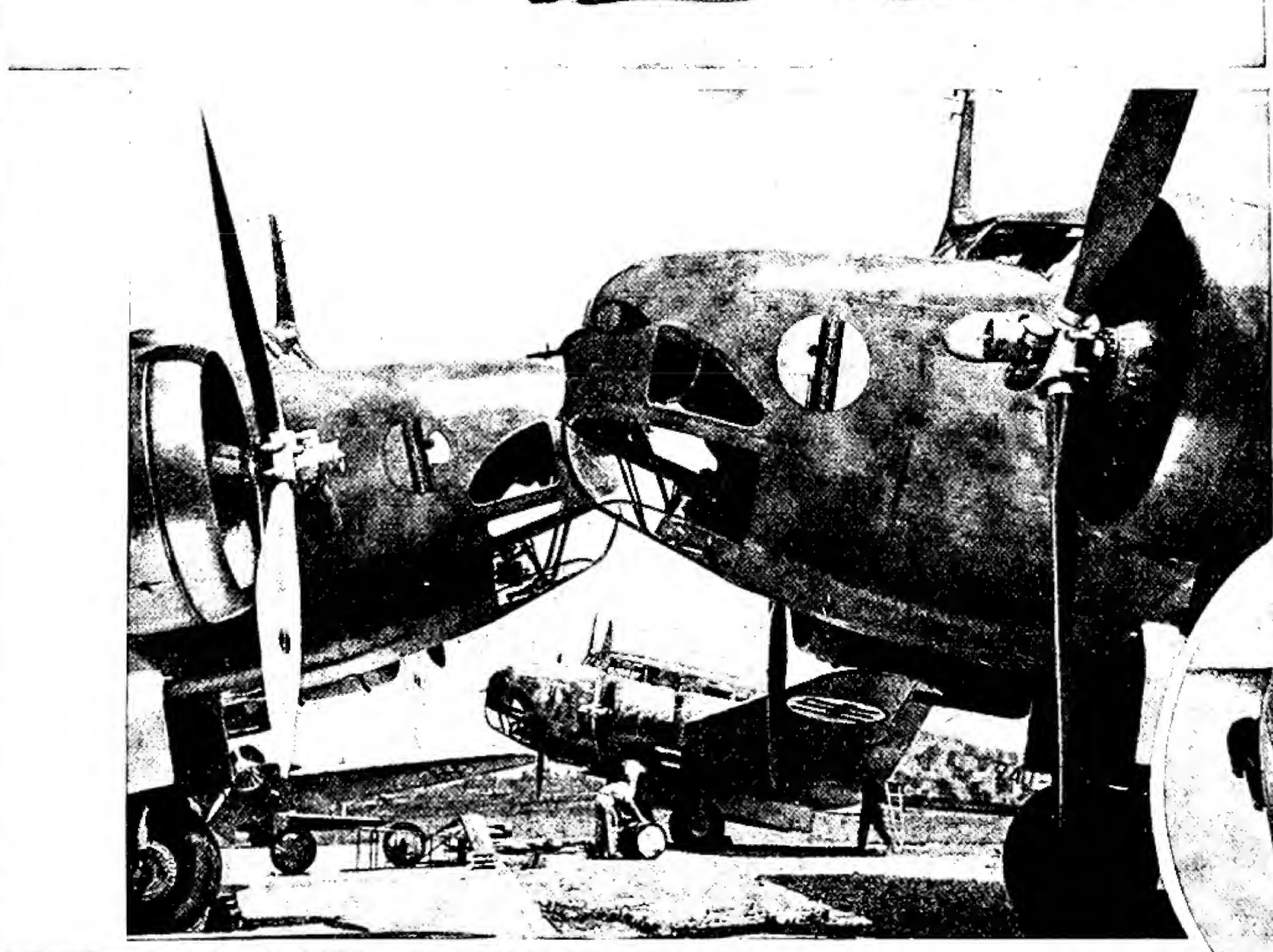


GRAZIANI ADVANCES AGAINST EGYPT

The top photograph shows Fascist soldiers, supported by caterpillar-drawn field-artillery, crossing the desert in the region of Sollum in October, 1940. The centre photographs are of (left) Italian machine-gunners defending their position near Sollum, and (right) an observer at the top of a mast on the look-out for British tanks. The fourth photograph is of Italian field-artillery, composed of native and colonial troops, in action near the Gulf of Sollum, immediately on the Egyptian-Libyan frontier.

Photos, Keystone; E.N.A.; Associated Press





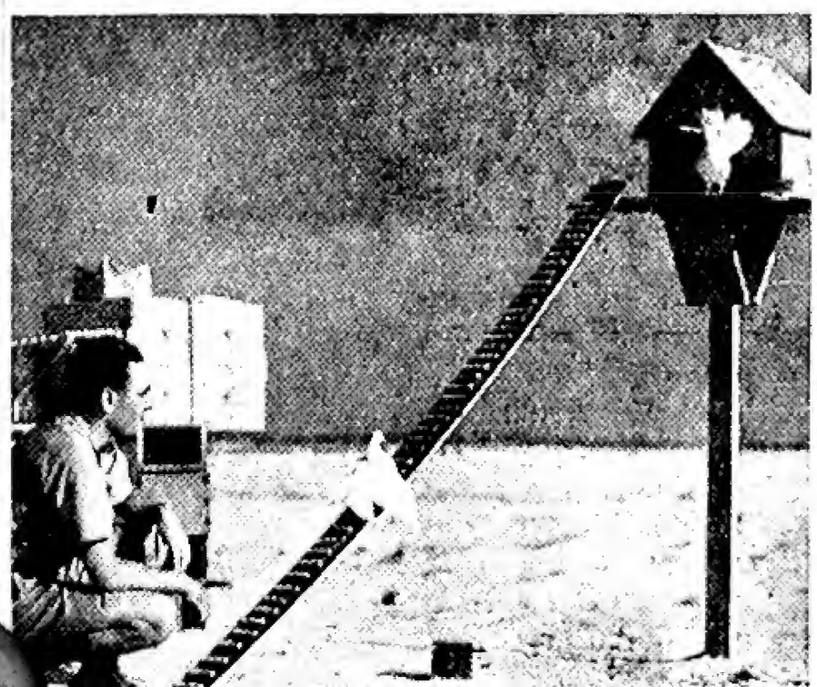


AIR WAR IN THE DESERT

The alert having sounded at a fighter aerodrome, R.A.F. men quickly don their parachutes and helmets while an airman chalks up the names of pilots about to go into action. The machine is an 8-gun Hurricane. Left : Italian bombers assembled for a flight over British positions. Bottom left, a sergeant-pilot teaches a pigeon to walk up to its loft. Keeping doves and pigeons was a hobby of many R.A.F. men in the Western Desert. Bottom right : an Italian Savoia bomber, after an encounter with an R.A.F. fighter, being towed to a desert dump. In circle, the pilot who brought down the bomber, just before he took off.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright : E.N.A.







small British contingent in Egypt. The Italian navy was considerably stronger numerically and in material than the Fleet which Britain, under the new conditions, could spare for the Mediterranean. The French navy had gone out of action, and the loss of Bizerta and other French ports markedly reduced the operational range of British squadrons. The air situation was even worse, for there were no air bases from which offensive action could be taken against Italy, or air protection be given to ships through the Sicilian Channel. For air protection, outside a limited range from Egypt, Britain had to rely on anti-aircraft armaments and on aircraft carriers, themselves very vulnerable to air attack.

The crucial question was whether our Middle East Army, now under General Wavell's supreme command, could, in cooperation with the Navy and air forces available, repel an attack from Libya and ensure the safety of Alexandria and the Suez Canal. There was the added complication that part of General Wavell's command was also responsible for the safety of the Sudan, British Somaliland, and Kenya colony should the Italians, from their East African colony, undertake diversionary offensive action. Nor could Palestine, where of recent years there had been so much trouble, be altogether denuded of troops.

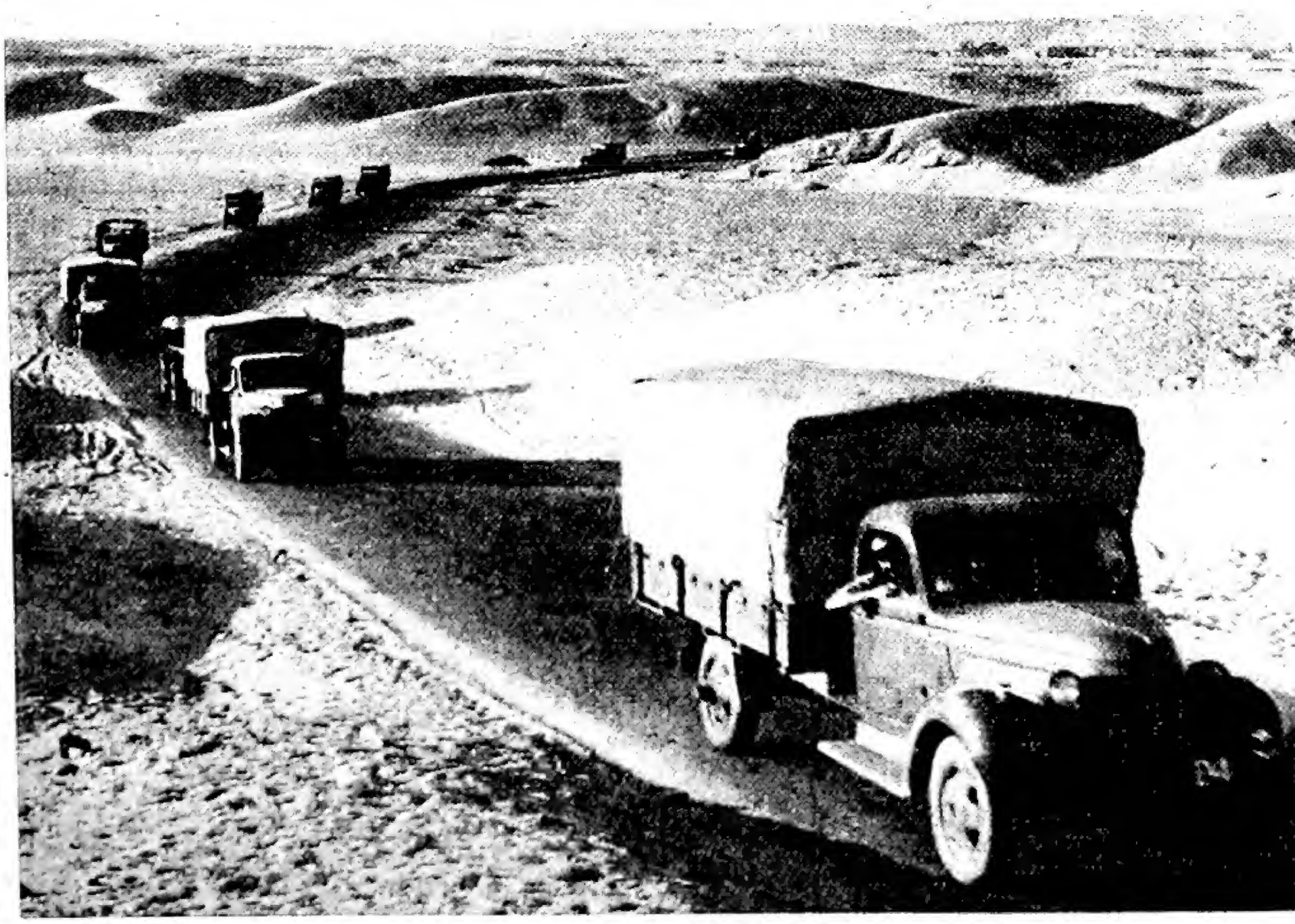
Wavell's Heavy Responsibility

The situation was all the more serious because neither the Army nor the Air Force in the Middle East was equipped with armaments up to the highest modern standard. It should be remembered, too, that in General Wavell's army there were Australian and New Zealand formations which, though magnificent material, were still in the early stages of training and organization. Nine months of war had not given much time to raise troops from scratch, to arm and organize them, and to transport them over great stretches of ocean. To meet Italian armoured divisions General Wavell had a small force of tanks and mechanized cavalry well accustomed to desert conditions, but his mobile forces included cavalry regiments still retained on a horsed basis for employment in Palestine; till these latter were mechanized they could be of little value in desert warfare.

For reinforcements General Wavell had to look to India, but such British troops from India as could be spared had already been dispatched to England, and native Indian units were equipped on an even lower scale than British units in the Middle East. Further contingents of Anzacs might be expected, but not for some time, because part of the units earliest raised had been sent to England. How urgent and important was the question of reinforcements will therefore be understood.

Fortunately our Middle East forces, while at their weakest, were granted a respite, for the intense summer heat of Libya made active operations on a large scale impracticable. During this respite the Navy was not idle. Admiral Cunningham, by his activities and his daring attempts to bring the Italian fleet to action, laid the foundation for the ascendancy he increasingly established over the Italian navy. Wavell, too, pursued an active policy, harassing the enemy outposts unceasingly. While his main bodies were employed in strengthening his chief defensive position at Mersa Matruh, where the railway from Alexandria terminated, he maintained





REINFORCEMENTS FOR THE LIBYAN CAMPAIGN

An Australian Imperial Forces convoy on its long trek through the arid desert from Palestine to Egypt. In the top photograph is part of a line of new tanks just arrived for the Army of the Nile. The intense heat of the summer, during which there was little fighting, gave Britain the opportunity to reinforce with additional men and equipment.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

on the frontier a few small infantry posts and a mobile screen of mechanized cavalry and artillery. These light troops showed great enterprise and energy, constantly raiding into the enemy's territory and engaging—in some cases capturing—his frontier forts. Such operations, while giving valuable training and experience of what could be accomplished by swift-moving mechanized forces under desert conditions, established a marked moral superiority over the Italians and induced a sense of caution in enemy leaders.





ENEMY COLUMN HALTS AT SOLLUM

Early in September, 1940, Marshal Graziani's men advanced across the Libyan-Egyptian frontier at Sollum, making towards Mersa Matruh, along the coast. On the left, an air view of the effect of Italian bombing on Sollum, the bombs for the most part falling wide among the sandhills.

The Home Government, too, by taking an outstandingly bold and far-sighted decision, made good use of the respite. For when the air Battle of Britain led to the postponement of Hitler's threatened invasion they decided to send reinforcements of men and up-to-date equipment to Egypt, ill as they could be spared by the Home army, still affected by the loss of material and the disorganization experienced at Dunkirk. It was this remarkable decision, consequential on the victory achieved by the Royal Air Force, which laid the foundation for General Wavell's subsequent campaign. Although the first consignment of



ITALIAN NATIVE SOLDIERS IN CAPTURED SIDI BARRANI

Scene of desolation in Sidi Barrani, abandoned to the Italians, the British forces under General Wavell having purposely lured Marshal Graziani's men unopposed as far as this coastal position. Here the Italian commander endeavoured to consolidate, establish supply depots, strengthen his communications, and extend the motor road from Libya towards Mersa Matruh, seventy miles farther east.

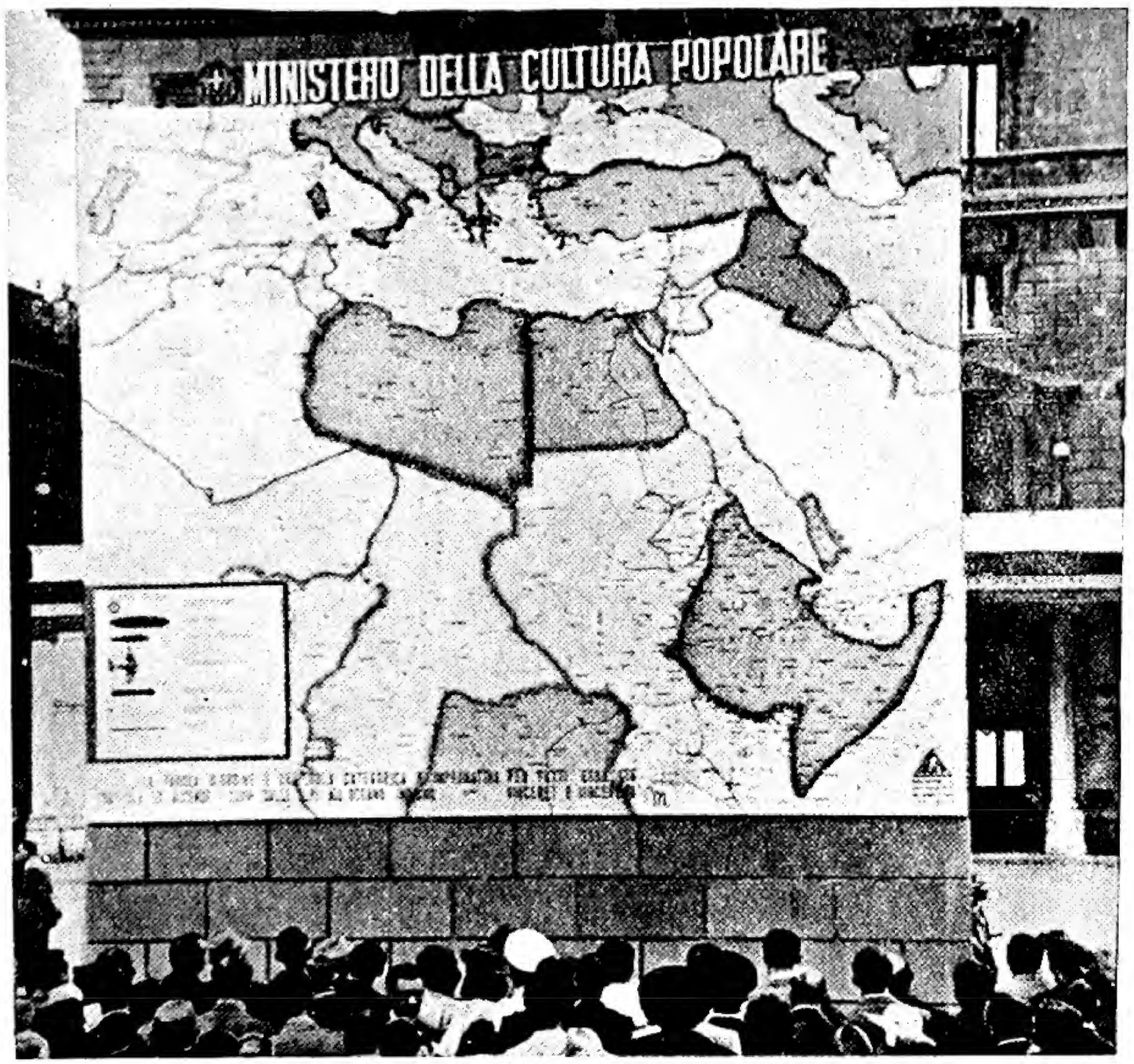
Photos, Associated Press; E.N.A.; Keystone

reinforcements had of necessity to be sent by the long Cape route, a further contingent, thanks to the success of Admiral Cunningham's operations, was safely convoyed through the Mediterranean before Graziani's army was in a position to become an imminent threat.

During the summer of 1940 Graziani had concentrated the major part of his Libyan army in Cyrenaica and had, as a competent soldier, built up reserves of petrol, munitions and other stores preparatory to an advance across the frontier. In August, 1940, his troops began to move up to assembly positions in the Bardia area, with detachments, which threatened wide outflanking movements, posted at oases in the desert farther south. Early in September his advanced guards crossed the frontier and General Wavell's frontier parties withdrew before them without offering serious opposition, other than harassing action by aircraft and light mobile detachments: their chief business was to maintain contact with and to observe the movements of the enemy.

Wavell had wisely decided not to fight for useless ground or to engage his weaker forces under unfavourable conditions. Graziani was consequently permitted to advance practically unopposed to Sidi Barrani, some 70 miles west of the Mersa Matruh defences. There he halted and set about the prolongation of his Libyan motor road, the improvement of water sources, and the establishment of depots of supplies preparatory to a final advance on Mersa Matruh. To protect these activities from General Wavell's raiding parties he deployed his fighting troops in a defensive position consisting of a number of separate camps, each prepared for all-round defence. These dispositions were to prove his undoing, for the garrisons of the camps were unable to give each other mutual support and were liable to defeat in detail. Graziani may, with considerable justification, have considered himself safely out of striking distance and protected by the desert from serious attack. Large, well-defended camps had therefore the advantage of being invulnerable to raiding parties, and at the same time facilitated the distribution of water and supplies. But they instilled a false sense of security, and this led to the neglect of patrolling activities.

Graziani's preparations, though undoubtedly necessary as a step to a further advance in force, were unduly prolonged. There can be little doubt that, in view of the reinforcements Wavell had received and the strength of the Mersa Matruh position, the Italian general had little confidence in his ability to carry out his task successfully. His armoured mobile units might achieve initial successes, but large forces of infantry would be required to confirm them. By careful preparations he had been able to ensure the advance of his army over 80 of the 150 miles of desert between the frontier and Mersa Matruh; but to traverse the remaining distance and to deliver an attack on a strong position, with precarious lines of communication behind him, was a more serious matter, even if his enemy did not launch a counter-attack. Possibly, too, he may have hoped that Hitler's promised invasion of Britain might yet make his problem one of the unopposed advance of an army of occupation. He appealed to Mussolini for reinforcements and for better equipment, having realized that his own was inferior to that of the British. Mussolini, more concerned with his Greek adventure, merely urged immediate action. Far from satisfied and with a doubting heart Graziani was making his final preparations to comply when he was struck by Wavell's lightning blow.



ITALIAN PROPAGANDA GOES AWRY

Set up in a public square in Rome, this war map showing the Mediterranean and Northern Africa (with Libya, Egypt and Italian East Africa specially marked) was intended to reveal to the Italian public the inroads into British territory made by the Duce's armies. The collapse of Graziani's offensive in Libya was but the forerunner of the series of naval and military reverses which Italy was to suffer as the war progressed.

Photo, Keystone



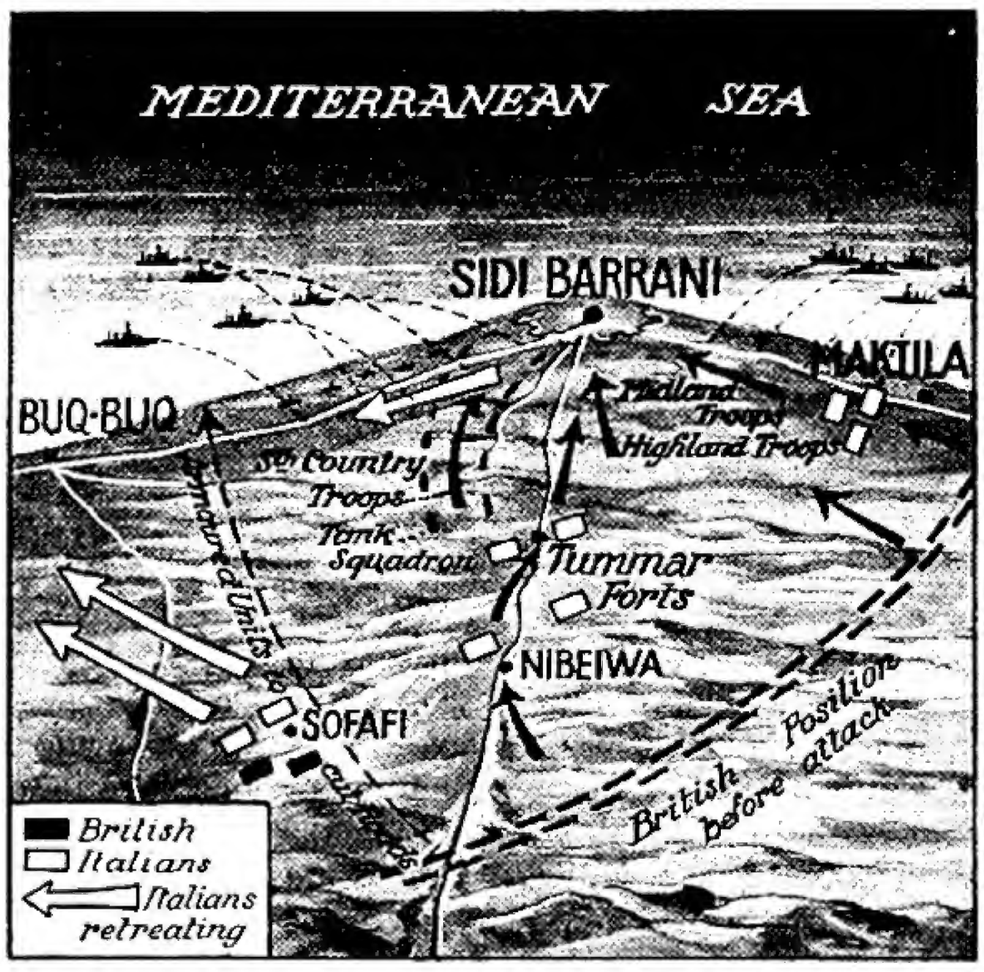
PARACHUTE TROOPS FOR LIBYA

Most of the belligerents in the Second Great War eventually established corps of parachute troops, and here are men from an Italian unit specially trained for such work in Libya.

Photo, Wide World



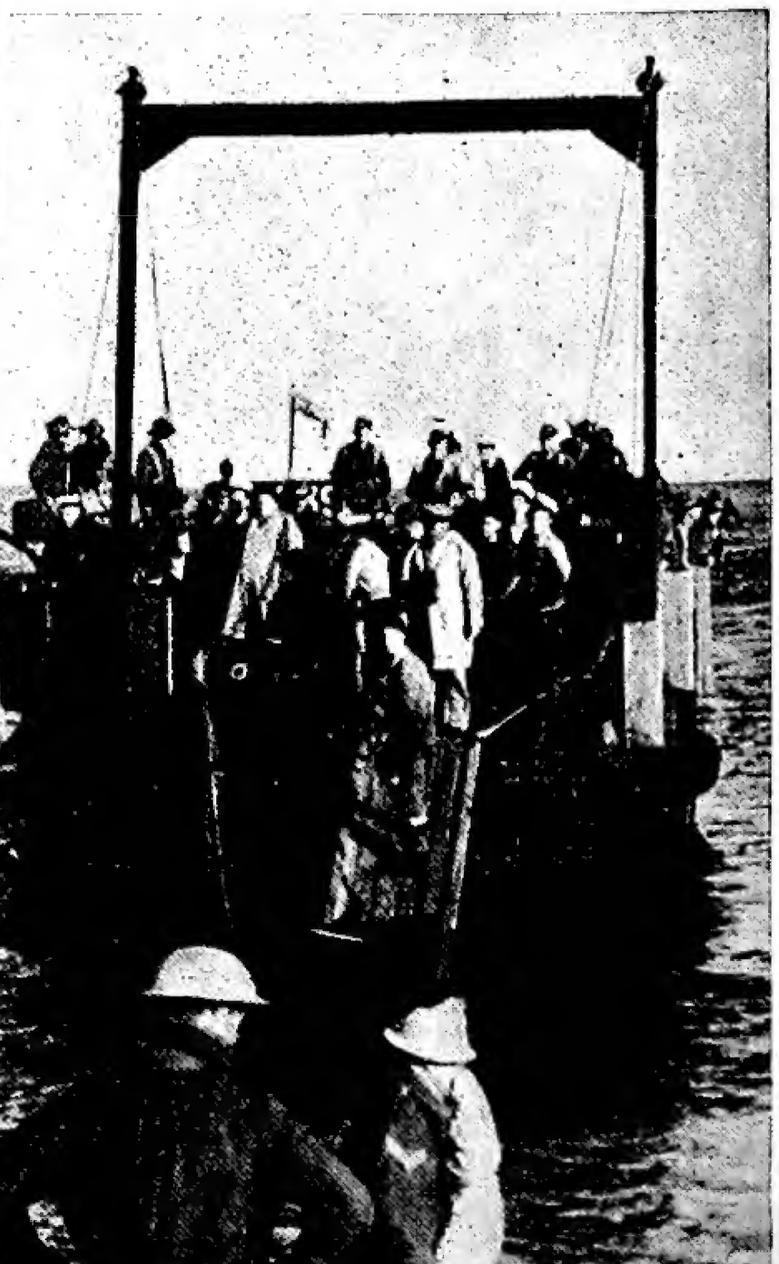


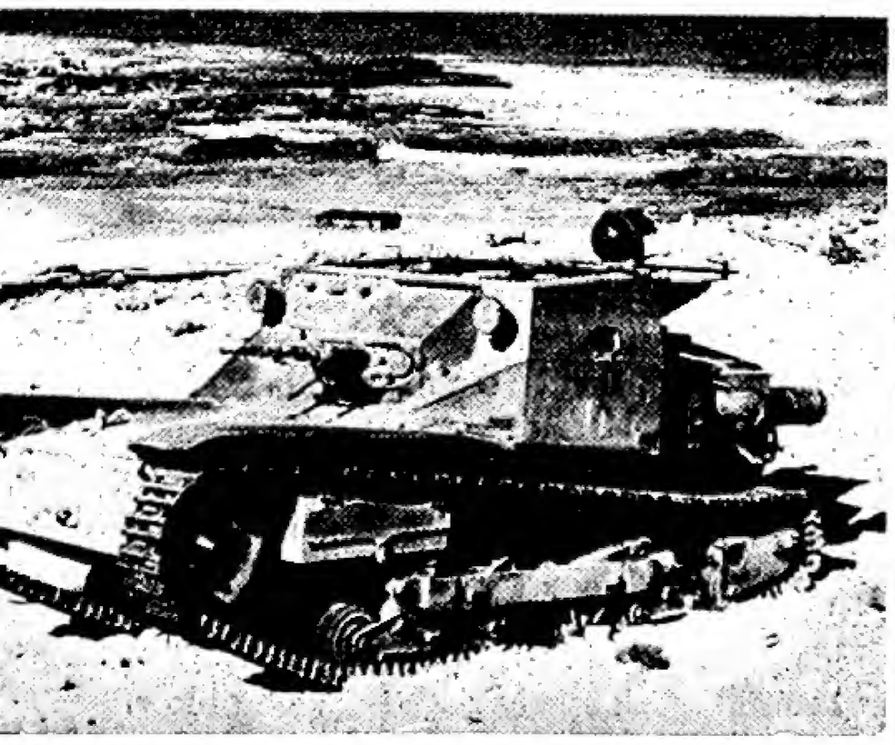


THE CAPTURE OF SIDI BARRANI

Covered by an intense air attack on coastal aerodromes and a heavy Naval bombardment of enemy positions, General Sir Maitland Wilson's Army of the Nile rapidly advanced from Mersa Matruh against Nibeiwa, Maktila and Sidi Barrani (see map). Nibeiwa was captured early on December 9, 1940, and Maktila fell a few hours later; the Tummar forts and all the frontier outposts in the region were taken in this first day's fighting, while Sidi Barrani was stormed on December 11. Above, British guns passing through Sidi Barrani; below, right, a stores tender pulls up to the beach; left, an abandoned enemy tank. Left centre, Gen. Gallina, Commander of the Italian forces at Sidi Barrani, seen as a prisoner of war at Bombay.

Relief Map drawn by Félix Gardon; Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright





Chapter 131

SIR ARCHIBALD WAVELL'S CAMPAIGN IN LIBYA: THE ADVANCE TO BARDIA

Preparation for the Offensive—Indian Division Takes Nibeiwa—The Tummar Forts—Assault on Sidi Barrani—Thousands of Italian Prisoners—Enemy Retreat Becomes a Rout—Over the Frontier—Storming of Sollum—Bardia Invested—Australian Infantry and British Tanks Begin the Assault—Capture of Bardia—Wavell's Order of the Day

THE Army of the Nile—to use the fine phrase coined by Mr. Churchill to describe that truly Imperial force of British and Indians, Rhodesians, Australians and New Zealanders, not forgetting their gallant comrades, the Free French and Poles—struck at Graziani and his Italians at dawn on December 9, 1940.

The British offensive would have been undertaken earlier, Mr. Churchill told the House of Commons on December 10, but for the necessity of sending a considerable part of the R.A.F. in the Middle East to aid the Greek Army in their heroic defence of their native land; so serious was the temporary diminution of our Air Force in Egypt that it was not until the beginning of December that it was once again in a position to afford the necessary support in a forward movement. However, the delay was employed to excellent advantage. Some 75 miles of barren and shelterless desert separated the main bodies of the British and Italian armies on the frontier of Egypt, and the British had to make their preparations for the advance when it was not yet certain that Graziani himself was not about to resume his offensive. Dumps of ammunition, petrol, food, and military supplies of all kinds were established in the No-man's-land of the desert, and large bodies of troops were brought up at night in readiness for the onslaught. At last General Sir Maitland Wilson, G.O.C. Army of the Nile, sent his men forward into the desert. Their advance was

R.A.F. Prepare the Way

covered by a tremendous strafing by the R.A.F. of the Italian aerodromes in Libya. Every aerodrome from Derna eastwards was heavily bombed, and in particular havoc was wreaked on the fields and hangars at Castel Benito on the night of December 7, and Benina the following night. The latter, the principal Italian air depot in Libya, was left a blazing wreck. Then on the night of December 8 ships of the Royal Navy moved along the Mediterranean coast and heavily bombarded the enemy positions at Sidi Barrani and Maktila.

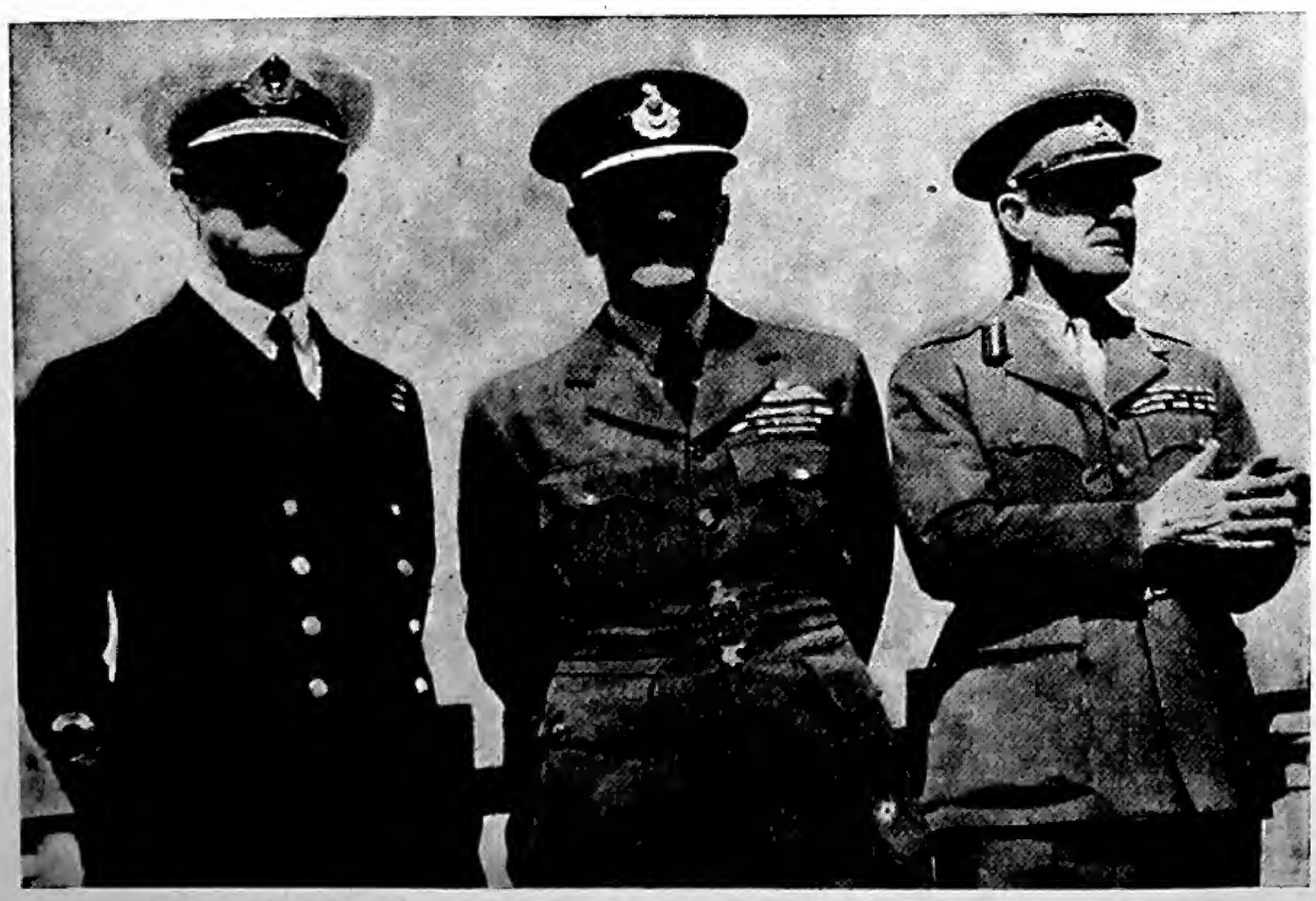
First news of the offensive was given on December 9 by General Sir Archibald Wavell himself. Seated at his desk in his headquarters at Cairo, the C.-in-C. of the British Forces in the Middle East made a dramatic announcement to the assembled newspaper correspondents.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I have asked you here to tell you that our forces began to carry out an engagement against the Italian Armies in the Western Desert at dawn this morning." He went on to tell that the British troops had steadily approached within striking distance of the enemy, and in conclusion sa d that "two hours ago I received word that we had captured an Italian camp."

First of the Italian forts to fall was Nibeiwa, situated in the desert some 15 miles to the south of Sidi Barrani. The honour of its capture fell largely to men of Major-Gen. Beresford-Peirse's Indian division—Moslems and Sikhs, Rajputs, Jats, Garhwalis, Madrassi—which was included in General Wilson's force. The story of this opening exploit was given in a communiqué issued by the Indian High Command in Delhi on December 26.

"Between December 6 and 7," it ran, "an Indian division left their concentration area near Mersa Matruh and concentrated, apparently unobserved, after a 23–30 miles march. On the following day the division moved some 50 miles farther to the west into an area about 15 miles south-east of Nibeiwa Camp, where the Italian armoured forces under General Maletti were located. These included elements of a Blackshirt division. Here our troops were joined by armoured units.

"The Italian positions had been reconnoitred during the hours of darkness, and it was found that the defences were definitely weaker on the south-west than elsewhere. It was accordingly decided to attack the camp from the south-west, and at the same time make a move with some artillery and infantry to create the impression of an attack from the south-east. During the night of December 8–9 our troops moved to their assembly positions of attack, their movements being covered by aircraft which flew over the camp and dropped bombs. Artillery was drawn up into position within 700 yards of the enemy forces. The attack began at 7 o'clock on the morning of the 9th, and was preceded by short but heavy concentration



THEY PLANNED AND EXECUTED THE LIBYAN CAMPAIGN

Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, who 'sustained every forward surge of the Army with all the flexible resources of sea power'; Air Marshal (later Air Chief Marshal) Sir Arthur Longmore, whose pilots 'wrested the control of the air from a far more numerous enemy.'; General Sir Archibald Wavell, who 'proved himself a master of war.' The quotations are from a speech by Mr. Churchill on February 9, 1941.

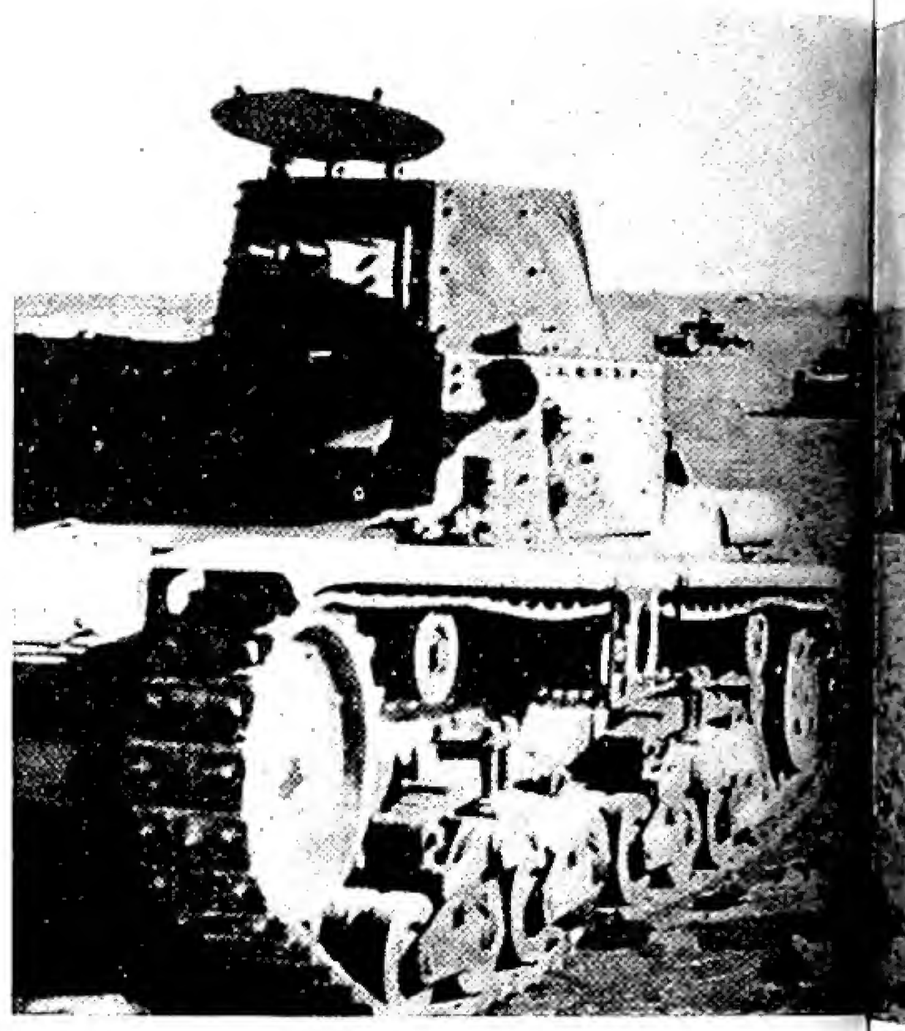
of artillery fire on the enemy defences. Simultaneously our tanks attacked and reached the defences about 7 a.m. They were followed closely by British and Indian infantry which had been brought up in motor transport to within 800 yards of the enemy positions.

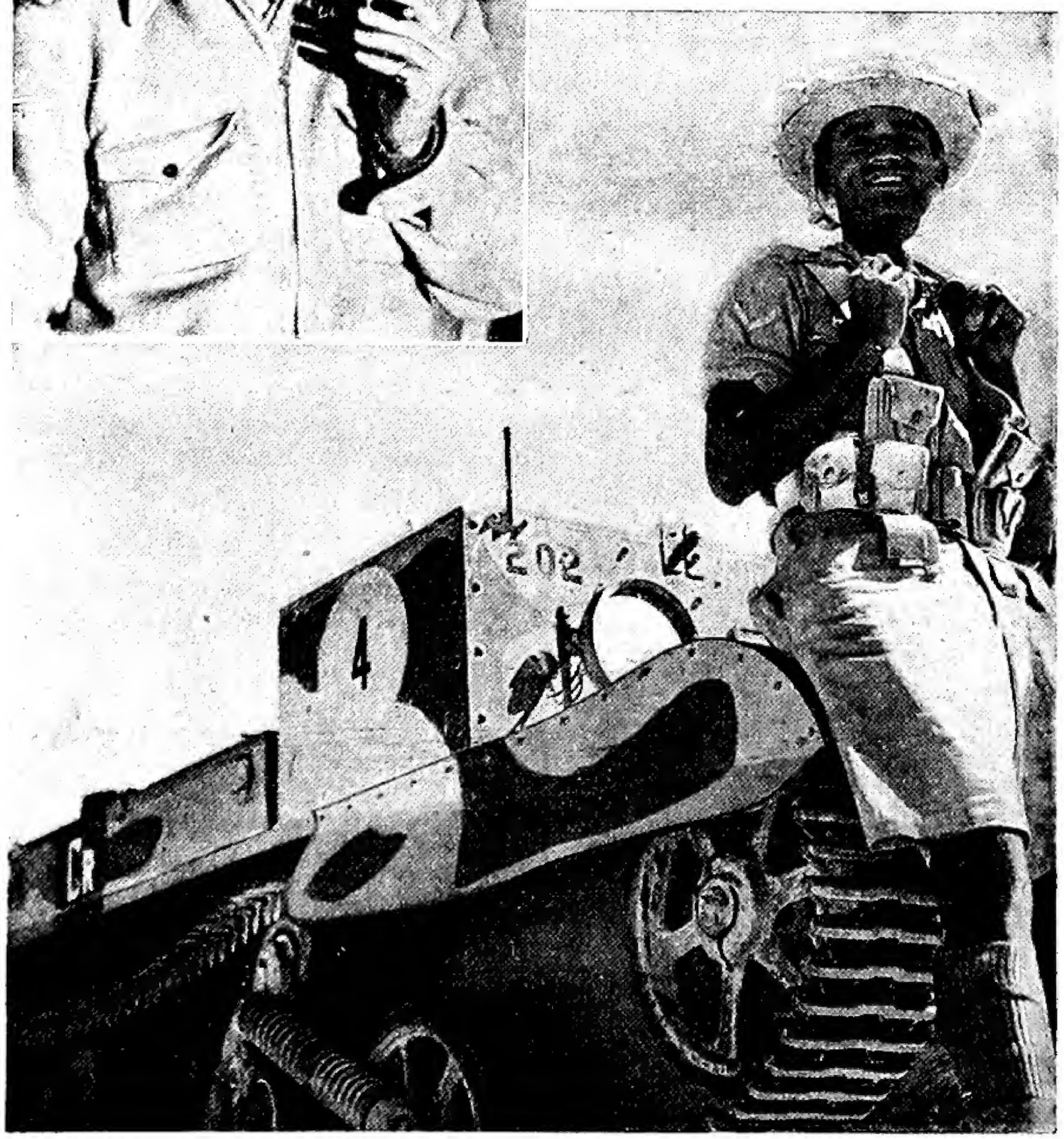
"The tank attack was covered by a smoke screen, and broke through the enemy lines. Many enemy tanks were caught while warming up their engines. They were fired on while still in a row, and were soon on fire. The Italians were evidently heavily shaken by the tank attack following so closely on the artillery bombardment and by the almost simultaneous arrival of British and Indian infantry, who swept through the camp. There was, however, considerable resistance, especially in the south-east corner of the camp, where hand-to-hand fighting took place. By a quarter to nine the whole of this defensive camp was ours. Some 2,000 prisoners were taken immediately; 30 enemy tanks were destroyed and 20 to 30 guns of various calibre captured, in addition to many rounds of ammunition."

Among the slain was General Maletti, the Italian commander, and his second-in-command was taken, together with some 500 others.

Following this excellent beginning, the Indian division moved north to Himaref, which formed part of another Italian defensive position, and launched an attack along the normal line of entry into the camp. British tanks forced an entry into the place, closely followed by two infantry battalions, one British and one Indian, who swept to the right and left respectively. A further infantry battalion formed a defensive flank to the east to guard against any possible counter-attack. The attack was completely successful, and 3,000 prisoners and many guns were taken. Simultaneously, Somaref was attacked by tanks and an Indian battalion. The tanks ran into an enemy counter-attack, whereupon one company of Indian troops got out of their lorries and, bringing their automatic weapons into action, killed about 400 of the enemy, while another company captured about 700 more. Altogether 1,000 prisoners were taken in this action, and the main position at Somaref was occupied early next morning.







Meanwhile, they were clearing up at Nibeiwa. Shortly after its capture the camp was visited by a Special Correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph." He described the battlefield as a staggering sight. Deserted lorries were dotted across the desert as far as the eye could see in every direction. For mile after mile dumps of ammunition, camouflaged with scrub, were neatly displayed alongside the tracks. Great barrels of diesel oil were tumbled about in huge heaps everywhere. The place, was more of a military township than a camp, and it was full to bursting with stores.

"Men must have spent days," he went on, "collecting stones from the face of the desert to build these mile-long walls, complete with ramparts, bastions, machine-gun nests, tank traps, land mines, and artillery emplacements. Tents and dug-outs, counter-sunk well below the level of the earth, must have meant hours of arduous digging in tough, stony ground.

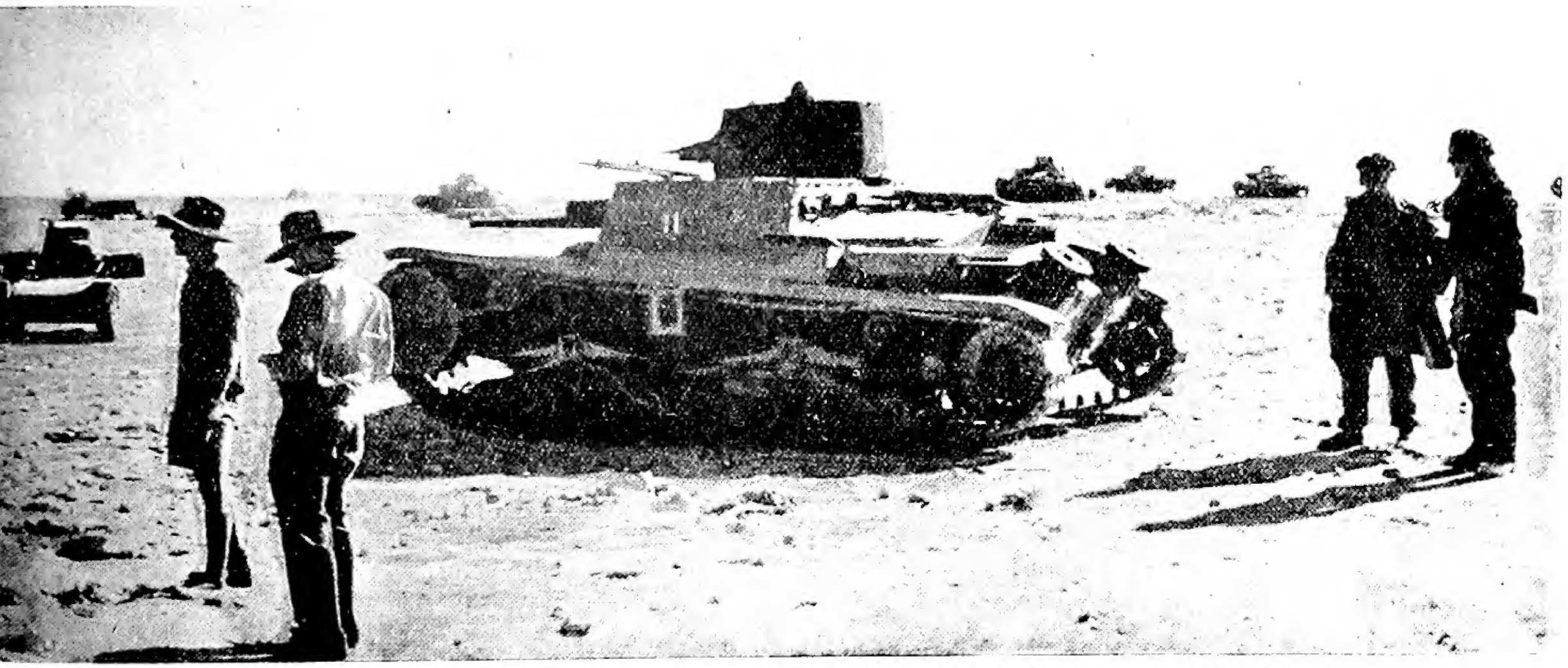
"Dispersed at regular intervals over a couple of square miles were vehicles ranging from 6 h.p. Fiat runabouts to 10-ton trucks. A score of medium tanks had already been removed by the British salvage corps and grouped outside the walls. Bicycles, motor-cycles and mules were scattered everywhere.

"Cookhouses and the quartermasters' stores were bulging with tinned goods. Case after case was filled with yard-long packets of

INDIAN DIVISION ROUTED ITALIANS AT SIDI BARRANI

General Wilson's assault on Sidi Barrani opened at dawn on December 9, 1940. The first fort to fall was Nibeiwa, for which initial success the Indian division commanded by Maj.-Gen. Beresford-Peirse (left) was largely responsible. This division won further distinction during the subsequent fighting which led to the capture of Sidi Barrani itself two days later. Here, a cheery member of this hardy Empire fighting force is seen with his Bren-gun carrier.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright



WHEN TANK MET TANK AT NIBEIWA

Valuable tactical lessons were learnt in the course of the Libyan offensive, and certain modifications were able to be made later in the design of our armoured fighting vehicles. This photograph is a striking tribute to the superiority of the British tanks and to the courage and élan of their personnel. It shows some of the forty Italian tanks captured or destroyed in the British tank assault at Nibeiwa, December 9, 1940.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

macaroni. I found British troops varying their rations with strange diets of quince jelly, tomato extract, tunny fish and spaghetti in sauce. Wooden casks and canvas bottles brimmed with excellent Chianti. There were liqueurs and mineral water in almost every tent. Tins of olive oil were stacked six feet high.

"British and Indian Tommies were gazing spellbound at this evidence of luxury. Some officers' messes had elegant silverware. There was plenty of perfumery. Gorgeous pieces of dress uniform in gilt, satin and velvet looked doubly incongruous amid desert dust.

"Then I wandered on, noting new surprises at every step—the dead General Maletti's tunic with four flamboyant rows of decorations, a tent full of beautiful wireless equipment, a handsome young Italian with a grenade in one hand and rifle in the other lying dead on the roof of a tent.

"As I progressed to the front lines I met big Fiat and Lancia lorries, brimful of dusty, dishevelled captives. Generals and colonels had been removed from their special camp to make room for new arrivals. And still prisoners were being taken . . ."

As soon as Nibeiwa and its neighbouring outposts had been captured, the British and Indian forces re-formed and moved across the desert to attack the Tummar group of forts, which lay to the north on the way to Sidi Barrani. Then a strong force of armoured units, part of the armoured division under Maj.-Gen. O'Moore Creagh, swept across the desert to the west of Sidi Barrani, and within 36 hours of the opening of the offensive had cut the coast road which connected it with Buq Buq and Sollum. Their advance was furthered by a tremendous bombardment from ships of the British Mediterranean Fleet, which were moving up and down the coast shelling the Italian positions and columns of troops and motor transports.

On board the ships the course of the battle raging ashore was followed over the wireless, and one who was there said that it was like listening to an intensely exciting B.B.C. sports commentary. One of the messages overheard came from the commander of a British tank, who said, "I am stopped in the middle of 200 men—no, 500 men—with their hands up. For heaven's sake send up the blankety-blankety infantry." Another ran, "I am two miles south of the first Buq in Buq Buq." This place—known to the British soldier, of course, as "Bugbug"—was captured on December 10 by the armoured brigade, and with it 14,000 prisoners. So large was the bag, indeed, that the tanks sent out an S O S for the infantry, saying that they were anxious to continue their advance and did not want to be bothered with acting as warders. So a battalion of Indian infantry was rushed to the scene, and the armoured brigade continued its pursuit of the Italians.

Meanwhile, British columns had been driving nearer and nearer to Sidi Barrani. One by one the forts surrounding it were stormed or capitulated. Maktila was carried a few hours after Nibeiwa, and in its capture a great part was played by the 15-inch guns of the Fleet, which so scared the Libyan levies that they deserted their Italian officers and fled helter-skelter down the road to Sidi Barrani.

Before the first day of the offensive closed the camps of



COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, ARMY OF THE NILE

Lieut.-General Sir H. Maitland Wilson, seen here in his office at G.H.Q., had been Commander-in-Chief in Egypt since 1939; in December, 1940, he led the onslaught on Sidi Barrani and its fortresses. Of him, a few months later, Mr. Churchill said that he was 'one of our finest tacticians.'

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright



AFTER THE CAPTURE OF BUQ BUQ

Buq Buq was captured by a British armoured brigade on December 10, 1940, and 14,000 prisoners surrendered. Some of them are here seen silhouetted against the evening sky, while in the foreground are the figures of British guards. So great was the number of Italian captives in these operations that their disposal and transport became an embarrassing problem.

Photo, Wide World

Tummar East and Tummar West had both been captured, and by Dec. 11 all the Italian outposts in the desert had been overrun and the way was clear for the assault on Sidi Barrani itself. It was held by Blackshirt regiments under General Gallina, in command of the 23rd Corps, and now it was assailed by the British brigade which had just stormed the Tummar camps, assisted by an armoured brigade operating eastwards from Buq Buq. On the night of Dec. 10 they bivouacked in the desert, and at dawn the long columns of British lorries continued their march across the plain until they were within 3,000 yards of the Italian lines. Here the attackers came under heavy fire. Swiftly debussing, the infantry went into the attack—on the left wing an English South Country regiment, Highlanders in the centre, and a Midland regiment on the right. Throughout the battle a sandstorm was raging—"hellish" was the word used by a major to describe it. "The Blackshirts," he went on, "stuck to their guns surprisingly well. It was extremely hard to see them in their trenches among the sand dunes, and there were plenty of them."

Assault on Sidi Barrani

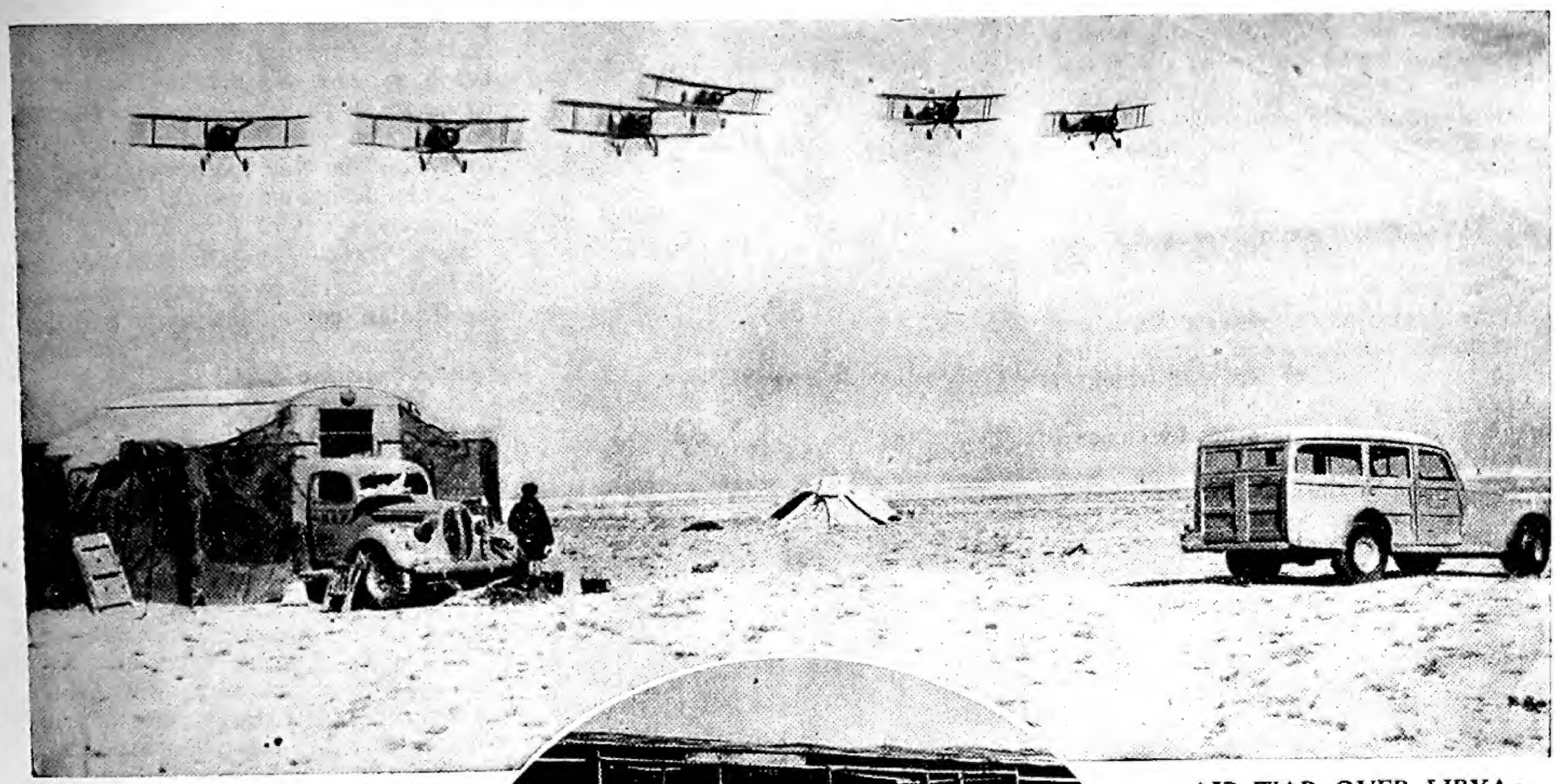
So strongly entrenched were the enemy and so withering their fire that the British Commander sent back a request for artillery and tanks. Swift in answer came a squadron of the most modern British battle tanks, which smashed their way through on the left flank, so enabling the infantry to carry the positions opposite them by storm. The Midlanders on the right were also enabled to make some progress by reason of heavy artillery support. Still in the centre the Highlanders were held up, until the Brigadier, hearing of the successes on either flank, gave the order to advance. Then the Highlanders charged across the desert and drove the Blackshirts before them. By 2 p.m. the



FREE FRENCH MARINES IN THE WESTERN DESERT

Marines of the Free French Forces, some of whom are seen on patrol, took a very active part in the attack on Italian communications in Libya. Before Bardia was captured, on January 3, 1941, they cut the road that runs from that port to Tobruk.

Photo, British Official ; Crown Copyright



AIR WAR OVER LIBYA: EL ADEM AND BARDIA

Illustrating an aspect of the last phase at Bardia, this photo shows an Australian Gladiator fighter patrol returning to its base after sweeping the sky over Bardia preparatory to the Army's final thrust against the town. Circle, a battered maintenance workshop at El Adem, where was the largest Italian aerodrome in Libya.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

R.A.F. COMMANDER IN THE WESTERN DESERT

Air Commodore Raymond Collishaw, D.S.O., O.B.E., D.S.C., D.F.C., Canadian-born, won his decorations in the war of 1914–18 as a pilot in the R.N.A.S. and R.A.F., shooting down sixty German machines. During the Libyan operations of 1940–41 he was A.O.C. Egypt Group, Middle East Command.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



Scots had won a foothold on a low ridge looking down on Sidi Barrani with the Mediterranean and British ships beyond.

Meanwhile, the tanks on the British left wing had nosed their way along the shore, and British troops were also operating from the direction of Maktila in the east, driving a host of Italian fugitives before them. About three o'clock the Highlanders on the ridge went over the top again. Racing down the scrubby slopes, they charged into the ruins of Sidi Barrani. For a few hectic minutes there was fierce hand-to-hand fighting; then group after group of the defenders held up their hands, waving handkerchiefs and shirts and crying "Ci rendiamo!" (We surrender.) Some 15,000 prisoners were taken, but the number was constantly added to as the Blackshirts who tried to escape along the coast road to the east or west were rounded up. Among the prisoners were General Gallina himself and Generals Pescatore and Mezzari. General Gallina asked if he might address his troops, and when permission was given thanked them for having fought like good Fascists. The British, too, were not behind in their praise of the enemy. "The Italians fought bravely," said one British major, "you can take my word for that."

The news of Sidi Barrani's fall was announced by British G.H.Q., Cairo, in a special communiqué issued on December 11. Another communiqué gave details of the powerful cooperation of the Royal Navy and the R.A.F. in a highly successful operation. El Adem aerodrome in particular was raided, it was stated, on the night of December 10; several hangars and small buildings were set on fire by H.E. bombs, and the fires were visible at a distance of 60 miles as the last aircraft approached the target. In the Bardia-Sollum area many bombs

had been dropped on motor transport concentrations and retreating enemy troops; at Sofafi an enemy camp was heavily bombed; and Fleet Air Arm aircraft attacked the barracks at Bardia and the escarpment road at Sollum.

General de Gaulle's headquarters in Egypt also issued a bulletin. "In the district of Sidi Barrani," it read, "the advance units of the French troops are taking part in the successful offensive of our British allies. We have taken a number of prisoners and war material. The 1st Battalion of Marines, which is fighting in Egypt, has been specially mentioned in an army order by General de Gaulle."

Then, finally, the Italian communiqué told how at dawn on December 9 armoured divisions attacked the Italian lines held by Libyan troops south-east of Sidi Barrani. "These troops gallantly resisted at first," it stated, "but after several hours' fighting they were overcome and fell back on Sidi Barrani. During December 9 and 10 exceptionally violent fighting took place. The 'Third of January' Blackshirt Division and the First Libyan Division led the Italian attack, inflicting grave losses on the enemy. Fierce fighting continued in the zone. General Maletti died at the head of his Libyan Italians."

"While it is too soon to measure the scale of these operations," said Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons on December 12, "it is clear that they constitute a victory which in this African theatre of war is of the first order, and reflects the highest credit upon Sir Archibald Wavell and Sir Maitland Wilson, the staff officers who planned these exceedingly complicated operations, and upon the troops who performed the remarkable feats of endurance and daring which accomplished it. The whole episode must be judged upon the background of the fact that it is only three or four months ago that our anxieties for the defence of Egypt were acute. Those anxieties are now removed,



COMMANDER OF THE TANKS

Major-General Michael O'Moore Creagh, commander of the Armoured Division which made the spectacular dash across the Western Desert in December, 1940, was a cavalry leader of renown. He trained the armoured forces engaged in the Libyan operations. *Photo, "Daily Mirror"*

and the British guarantee and pledge that Egypt would be effectively defended against all comers has been in every way made good."

Following Sidi Barrani's fall the Italian retreat continued; indeed, along the coastal road it developed into a rout. While the battlefield was being cleared of the enormous quantity of war material which littered it, while the last outposts of resistance were being mopped up, while the prisoners—now numbering nearly 30,000—were being herded together and taken down to the beach, whence they were transported by sea to Alexandria—causing a tremendous traffic jam in the process—the Army of the Nile maintained contact with the fleeing enemy, thrusting them before them out of Egypt into Libya.

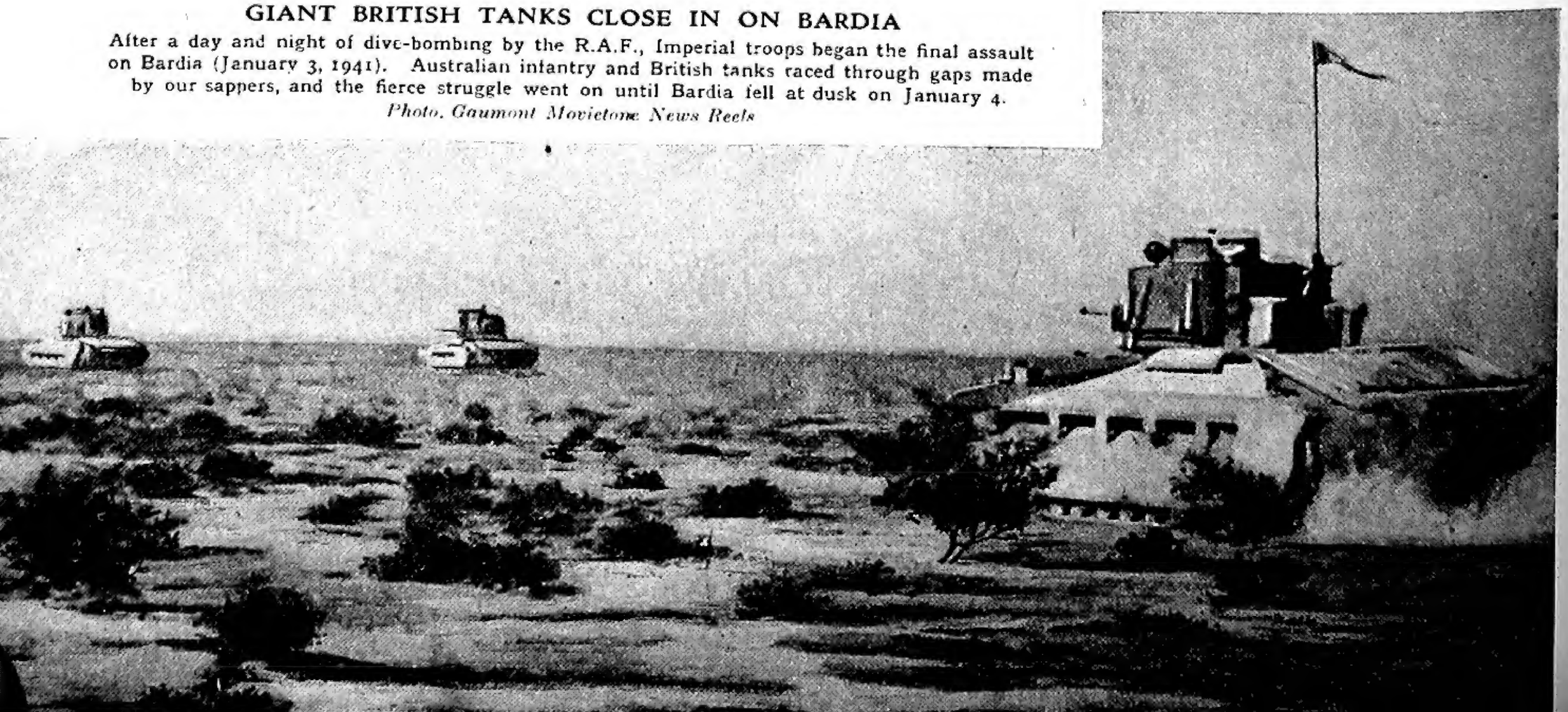
Preliminary Naval Bombardment

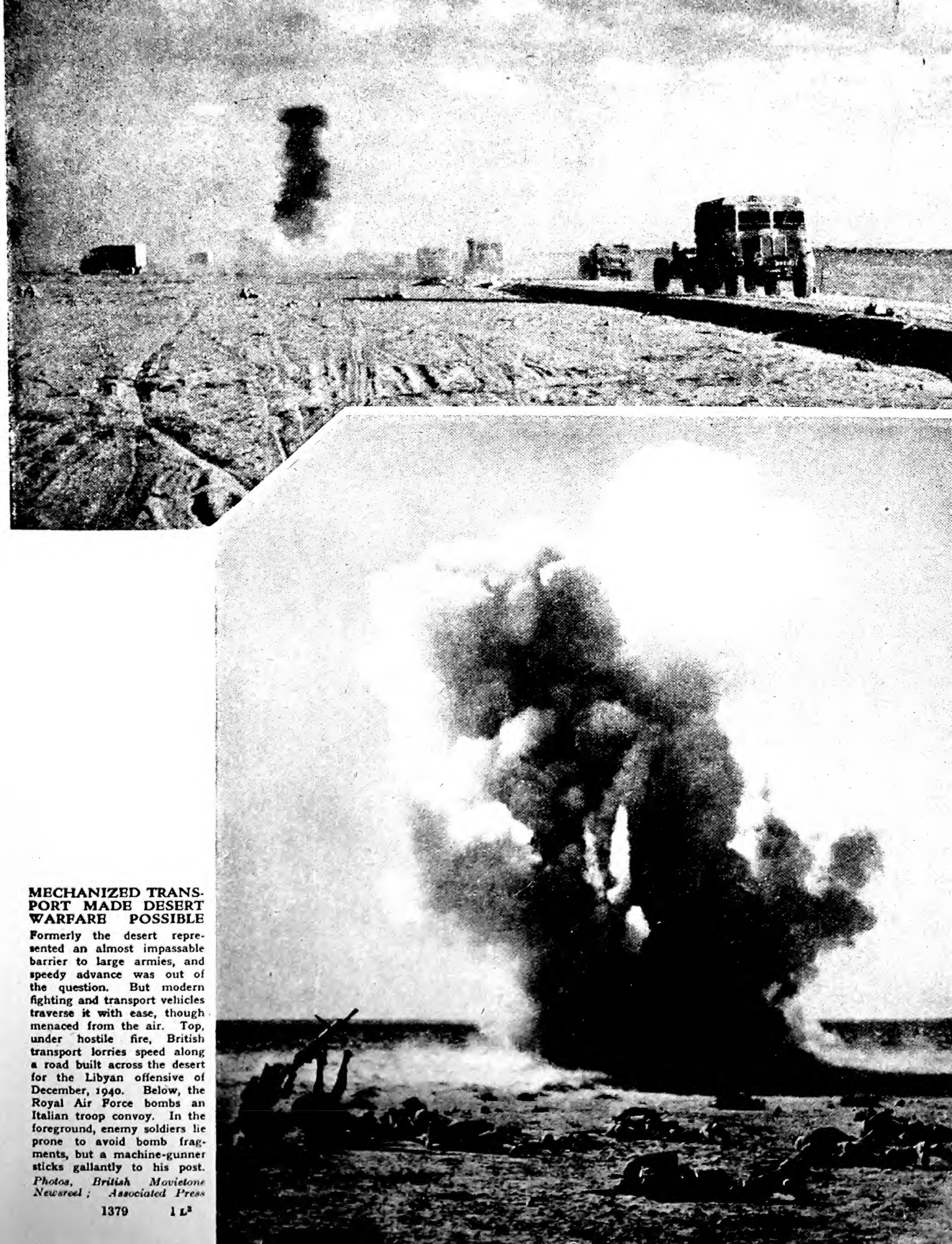
Both heavy and light units of the Mediterranean Fleet continued to harass the Italian communications, and the focal points of the Italian retreat—Sollum, "Hellfire Pass" and Bardia—were heavily shelled. Particularly effective was the naval bombardment throughout Dec. 11. Aerial activity was also intense above the battle zone and far beyond it in the Western Desert. Every Italian aerodrome was relentlessly pounded, and hour after hour the waves of British fighters and bombers swept over the enemy concentrations, deluging them with devastating fire. Meanwhile, in Rome it was maintained still that Sidi Barrani had not fallen completely, and that, though the situation was serious, Marshal Graziani was throwing in huge reserves of men and arms, so as to restore the situation. Not until December 15 did the Italians admit that Sidi Barrani had been "evacuated"; and, to ease the admission, their communiqué spoke of "bloody encounters" in the desert, attack and counter-attack without respite; "the battlefield is strewn with groups of enemy armoured cars which are on fire." The Italian Air Force, it was claimed, had shown great activity and an admirable spirit of sacrifice.

Day followed day, and still the relentless pursuit continued. The Army, Navy and Air Force were continually on the job. There was no rest for the remnant

GIANT BRITISH TANKS CLOSE IN ON BARDIA

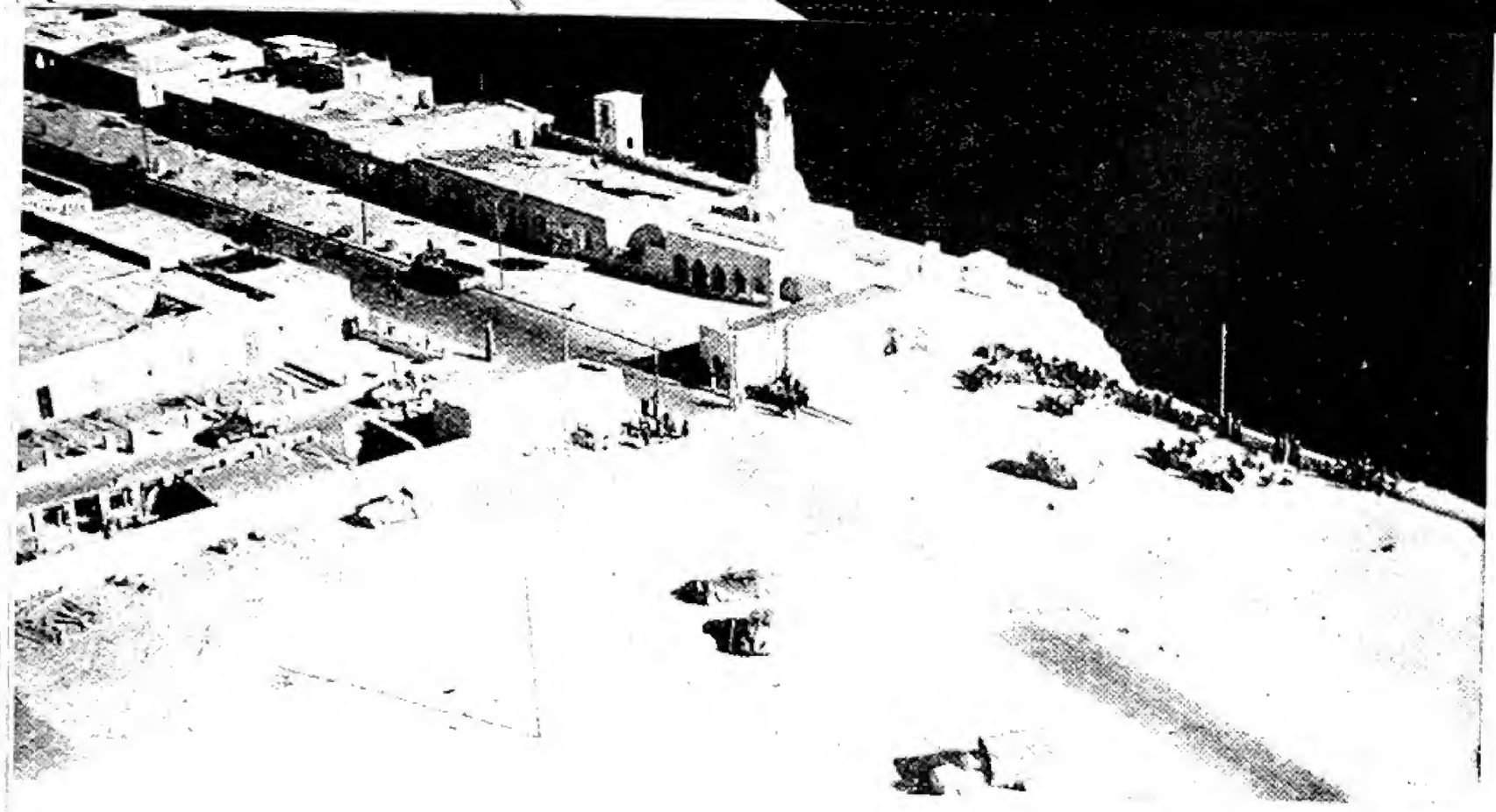
After a day and night of dive-bombing by the R.A.F., Imperial troops began the final assault on Bardia (January 3, 1941). Australian infantry and British tanks raced through gaps made by our sappers, and the fierce struggle went on until Bardia fell at dusk on January 4.
Photo, Gaumont Movietone News Reels





MECHANIZED TRANSPORT MADE DESERT WARFARE POSSIBLE

Formerly the desert represented an almost impassable barrier to large armies, and speedy advance was out of the question. But modern fighting and transport vehicles traverse it with ease, though menaced from the air. Top, under hostile fire, British transport lorries speed along a road built across the desert for the Libyan offensive of December, 1940. Below, the Royal Air Force bombs an Italian troop convoy. In the foreground, enemy soldiers lie prone to avoid bomb fragments, but a machine-gunner sticks gallantly to his post. *Photos, British Movietone Newsreel; Associated Press*



MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY AND

The relief map below explains the operations described in Chapters 130 and 131. Italy's geographical position endowed her with certain advantages in view of the increased range and striking power of modern aircraft. Equally potent were Mussolini's warships if boldly and skilfully handled.

Menace to British Naval Bases

Early in the war fears were freely expressed that Malta might become untenable and that the Allied Fleets might be driven to take refuge in Alexandria. As it turned out, the Regia Aeronautica failed dismally to hem in or hinder in any great measure the proud ships of the Royal Navy; while the Italian warships on almost every occasion that they were encountered made use of their extra turn of speed to break off the combat. The map* shows the chief naval and air bases of belligerents and neutrals, and enables the campaign in the Western Desert to be followed step by step. It should also be studied in reference to subsequent operations in the Balkans, Crete, and Syria.

**Distance in nautical miles from Gibraltar to Malta, 985; Malta to Beirut, 1,080*



B LIBYAN CAMPAIGN OF 1940–41

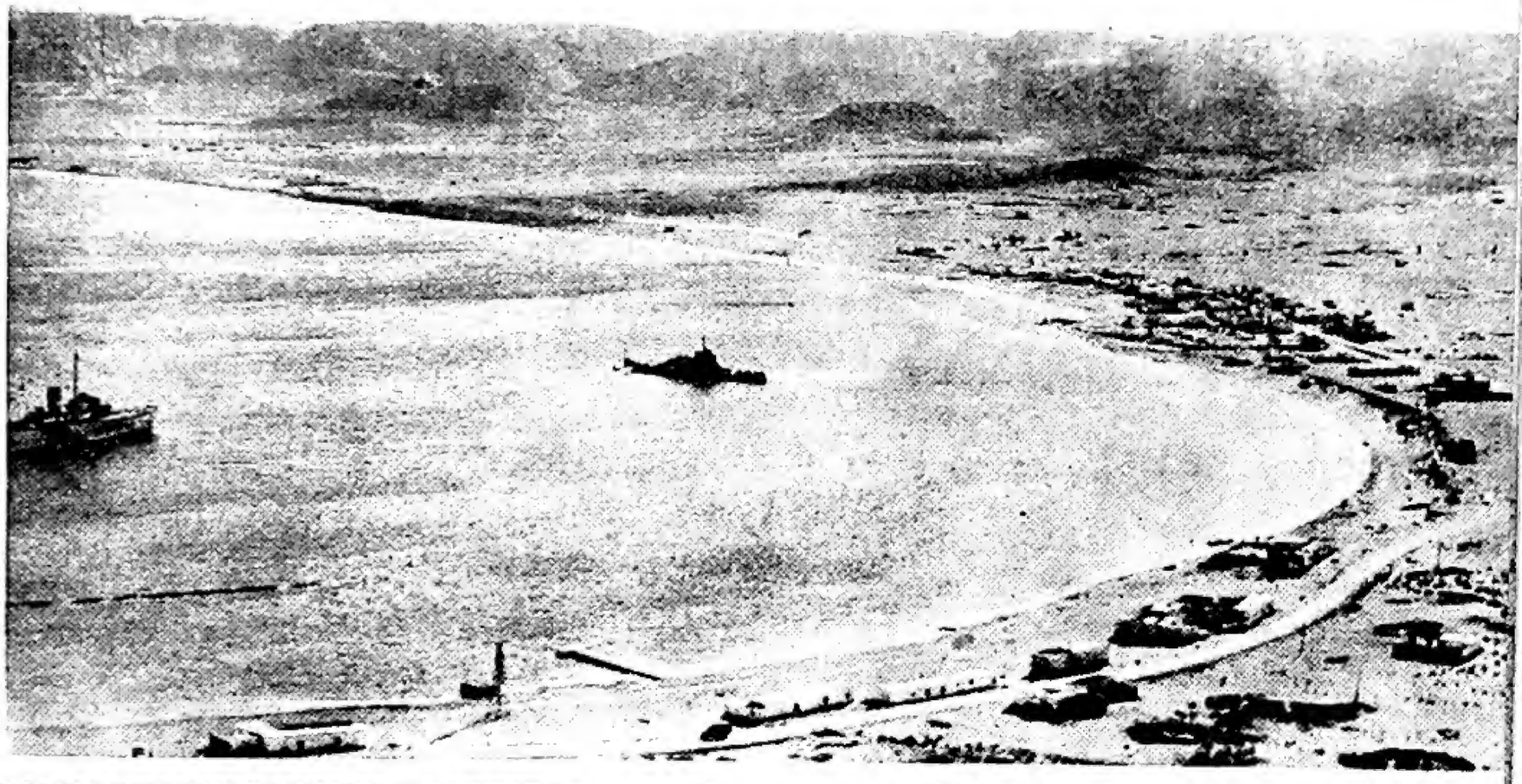
Graziani's Army Threatens Egypt

Long before his Duce declared war Marshal Graziani had concentrated most of his Libyan army in Cyrenaica in readiness for an attack on Egypt, building up enormous reserves of fuel and munitions. His advance troops crossed the frontier in September, 1940; General Wavell allowed them to proceed as far as Sidi Barrani, and here Graziani settled down, preparing for the next stage—to Mersa Matruh.

British Offensive from Mersa Matruh

On December 8 the Army of the Nile opened a lightning offensive, advancing from Mersa Matruh and driving against Sidi Barrani, which was captured on December 11. Sollum was stormed on the 16th (general view of the Bay, right). Pushing straight on, the British forces moved against Bardia, 12 miles inside Libyan territory. Invested ever more closely, it was eventually taken by assault and fell at dusk on January 5. The aerial photo on left shows the entrance to Bardia, with British troops resting near the wall.

Relief map specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon : Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright*





FORTY THOUSAND PRISONERS WERE TAKEN AT BARDIA

With the capture of Bardia, on January 5, 1941, over 460 guns, with 130 tanks and more than 700 enemy transport vehicles, fell into the hands of the victors. The Italian losses were in the region of 45,000, of whom over 40,000 were prisoners. Top, a party of Italians surrenders; below, some of the 40,000 march away to captivity. Note the solitary British escort

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright



MEN OF THE AUSTRALIAN DIVISION ADVANCE ON BARDIA

Both in the general assault and the final attack the Australian Division, under Major-General Sir Iven Mackay, was in the thick of the fight for Bardia. The Division was the first Australian force to reach the Middle East and the first to go into action; it played a leading role in the operations of January-February, 1941, in which the Italian army in Cyrenaica was virtually destroyed. Later it was to gain fresh laurels in other theatres of war.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

of the Italian Army as it staggered out of Egypt. Despite the fatigue of the troops, the necessity of overhauling motor vehicles, and the terrific sand storms which now blew up, the Army of the Nile continued their pursuit.

After a week of continuous fighting Cairo announced on December 15 that operations were now proceeding on the Libyan frontier, where our troops continued to press the enemy. A heavy dust storm was raging and visibility was bad. It was estimated that some 26,000 prisoners had been taken, together with vast quantities of guns, tanks, and equipment of all types. The Navy was continuing its operations along the coast in support of the army between Sidi Barrani and Bardia, while, as for the R.A.F., they continued their intensive activities in support of the land operations of the army. Aerodromes, landing grounds, fuel dumps and store parks, motor transport and troops on the march were bombed and machine-gunned.

On the Libyan Frontier

A few hours later there came the news from Cairo that, though the Italians were still holding strongly defended positions about Sollum, General R. N. O'Connor's advanced forces were engaged in heavy fighting across the frontier in Libya. The weather was wretched, as rain storms alternated with sand storms. Visibility was so poor that flying was restricted, but the communiqués had still much to say of the R.A.F.'s activities. By now the Italian army which had invaded Egypt, numbering well over 50,000 men and comprising two Libyan divisions, one Blackshirt division, an armoured column amounting practically to a division, and a Metropolitan (Italian regular division), had been dispersed. More than half were prisoners, and thousands more were casualties. Only a doomed fragment of the once great force had found their way back across the frontier into Libya.

Sollum, the last outpost of the Italians in Egypt, was stormed by British armoured units, closely followed by infantry, on December 16. Free French troops showed great courage and dash in the final onslaught. On the same day the frontier forts of Musaid, Sidi Omar, Shefferzen, and Fort Capuzzo were entered by the British. Shortly before Sollum was captured, one of the British armoured columns which had swept westwards to Buq Buq intercepted a division of Italian regulars, the 64th Catanzaro Division (under General Amico), which was moving along the coast from Sollum. So surprised were the Italians that practically all the 14,000 men composing the division were captured, together with large quantities of war material. An infantry brigade took charge of the prisoners, and marched them away. But theirs was no victory march: just two long columns of tired, dusty conscripts, every batch of 200 or 300 being in charge of a single Cockney private.



MAJ.-GEN. SIR IVEN MACKAY

A veteran of Gallipoli, Major-General Mackay was knighted for his services in the Libyan campaign, in which he commanded the Australian Division. He had been awarded the D.S.O. in 1917 and the C.M.G. in 1919, and when the First Great War ended was a Brigadier-General.

Australian Official Photograph

Following the fall of Sollum the Imperial Army moved straight on Bardia, 12 miles inside Libyan territory. The place was strongly held, for within its walls were bottled up, under General Berti, the whole of the 62nd Division, together with what was left of the 63rd Division and the Blackshirts who had managed to escape from Sidi Barrani. The place was soon invested, and by day and night was shelled from the sea and land and bombed from the air. For a fortnight there was little change in the situation, save that the British surrounded ever more closely the central area of the Italian defences running for 15 miles round the top of a high cliff, with the port of Bardia lying down at the bottom of a deep wadi.

In the House of Commons on December 19 Mr. Churchill gave a further review of the fighting in the Western Desert: "This memorable

battle," he called it, " spread over this vast extent of desert, with swiftly moving mechanized columns, circling in and out of the camps and positions of the enemy, and with fighting taking place over an area as large as Yorkshire.

" One cannot say that the Italians have shown a high fighting spirit or quality in this battle," the Premier went on, " but perhaps their hearts are not in their work." Then, after stating that the Army of the Nile in the course of a week's continuous fighting had lost fewer than 1,000 killed and wounded of all ranks, British, Indian, and Imperial, Mr. Churchill paid a high tribute to General Wilson, " reputed to be one of our finest tacticians " ; General Wavell, " whose figure grows upon the eastern horizon " ; and Air Marshal Longmore, " whose handling of this situation in cooperation with the Army deserves the highest praise." Then he made an interesting admission.

" Risks have been run," he said, " but they have been well run. It was not an easy thing in July and August—if we cast our minds back to that date—to send precious tanks of the best quality and cannon of which we were then so short, on the long journey around the Cape of Good Hope in order to enable us at first to defend ourselves and later to assume the offensive. I can only say that those were hard decisions to take, and that my right hon. friend, the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Anthony Eden), and I had many anxious days in coming to those conclusions."

By December 19 the position of the Italians in Bardia was stated to be precarious, since, although at the outset they were numerically superior, they were now opposed by a British force which had been steadily and strongly reinforced. Christmas brought no lull in the desert war. G.H.Q. Cairo continued to report that our artillery was harassing the enemy inside the defences of Bardia, while our preparations outside were progressing.

There was no attempt on the part of the enemy to relieve the besieged town. The garrison continued passively to await events. Completely surrounded by December 20, every day that passed saw the iron ring about it drawn tighter as Wilson brought up more troops and guns, tanks and 'planes. The R.A.F. delivered the first wave of the assault on the night of January 1. The next day there were terrific dive-bombing attacks ; for hours the British bombers roared



COMMANDER OF THE THIRTEENTH CORPS

Major-General R. N. O'Connor and his Corps took a prominent part in the advance through the Western Desert and the capture of Italian strongholds. Mr. Churchill later paid a tribute to his ' outstanding leadership and resolution.'

Photo, Associated Press

above the little town, dropping tons of bombs on every flight. Then at dawn on January 3 the Imperial troops moved to the assault, while from the air and sea 'planes and ships joined in delivering a terrific onslaught.

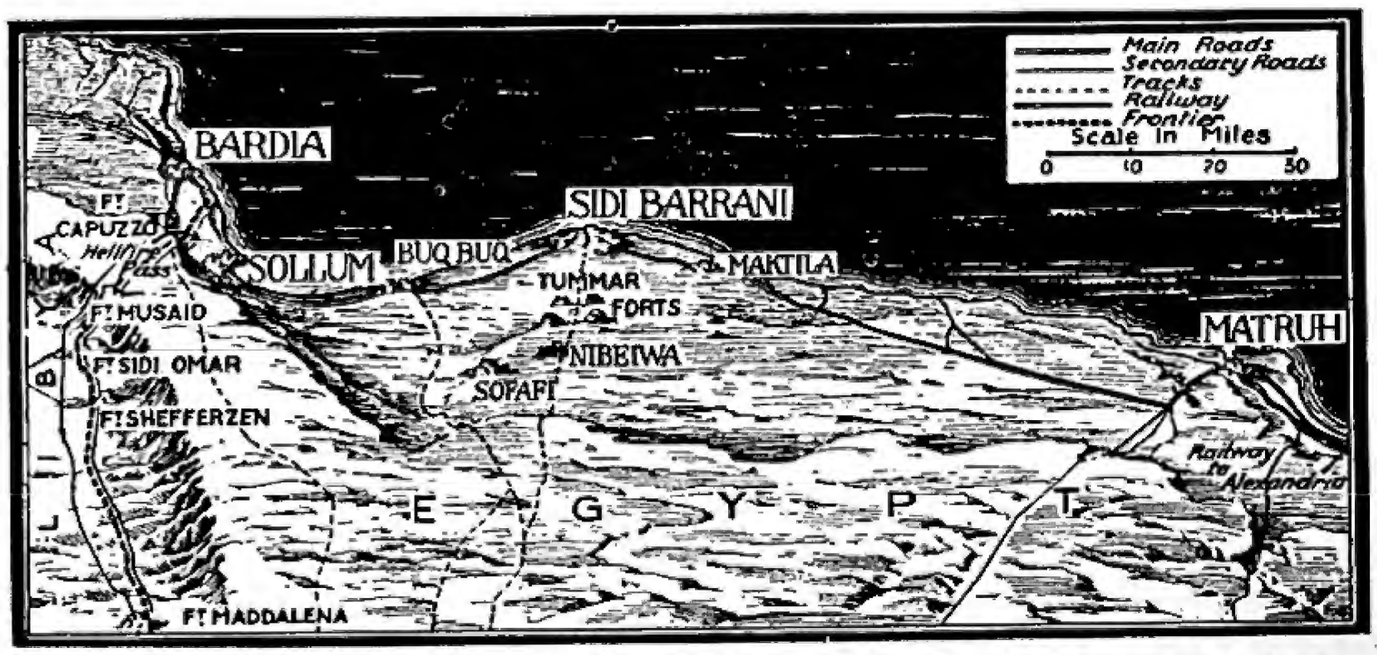
First to be engaged were the sappers, who cut the wire in front of the Italian first line and, in spite of heavy fire, bridged at several points the wide ditch which surrounded the defence perimeter, and located and touched off whole strings of land mines and tank traps. Then the Australian infantry (under General Mackay, a veteran of Gallipoli) and British tanks raced through the gaps. By evening the centre defences had been penetrated to a depth of two miles on a frontage of nine miles, and 8,000 prisoners had been taken. Fighting continued throughout the night and the next day. By nightfall on January 4 the Italian troops occupying the whole of the northern sector of the defences were forced to surrender ; British patrols penetrated into Bardia itself, and enemy resistance was confined to a small area in the south-east zone of the perimeter defences.

The town of Bardia fell at dusk. The final attack was a matter of a few minutes. It was made as before by the Australians, supported by British tanks. As they lay amongst the rocks awaiting the final word to charge, the Aussies were in the highest spirits. " What time do the ' pubs ' shut in Bardia tonight ? " they asked, " we mean to get there this evening." And get there they did. The Italians put up but slight resistance, and soon an Australian officer was hauling down the Italian flag from Government House and running up the Union Jack in its place.

By Sunday morning, January 5, the last pockets of Italian resistance were subdued. " All resistance at Bardia ceased at 13.30 hours today," read a special communiqué from Cairo. " The town with the total forces defending it and all stores and equipment is now in our hands." It went on to state that General Berganzoli, who took command of the garrison after the departure of General Berti just after Christmas, another corps commander, and four senior generals were prisoners of war ; that the total number of prisoners exceeded 25,000 ; and that amongst other booty captured or destroyed were 45 light and five medium tanks. Later it transpired that General Berganzoli was not among the prisoners. On the night before Bardia fell, revealed G.H.Q. Cairo in another communiqué, " Electric Whiskers," as he was nicknamed by his troops, and two Blackshirt divisional generals left their troops in the town to fight it out and fled into the desert. Not for long, however, since they were all rounded up within a week or two.

Immense Booty at Bardia

In due course it was announced in Cairo that the British had captured or destroyed in the Bardia action 368 medium and field guns, 26 heavy anti-aircraft guns, 68 light guns, 13 medium tanks and 117 light tanks, and 708 transport vehicles of one kind or another. The Italian casualties in the



THE BRITISH ADVANCE FROM MERSA MATRUH TO BARDIA

Illustrating the first stage of the Libyan campaign that opened in December, 1940, this map shows the territory up to and just beyond the Libyan-Egyptian frontier.

Relief Map specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*







IN CAPTURED SOLLUM

Sollum was stormed on December 16, when an Italian division moving along the coast towards the port was also captured. The amusing message (top, right) was found scrawled on the walls of a building in the town ; above, an Italian direction board ; centre, buildings wrecked by the British bombardment. The port proved most useful, though its nearness to the front line caused it to be frequently bombed by the Italians. Below, a scene on one of the quays.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright









THE INVESTMENT OF BARDIA

After the fall of Sollum, on December 16, British troops went on to surround Bardia, 12 miles inside the Libyan border. The assault began on January 3, 1941, and all resistance had ceased by 1.30 p.m. on January 5. Top, a British howitzer bombarding the town ; left, infantry in the front line ; below, guns abandoned by the enemy. General Berti (above, left) until late December commanded the Italian garrison ; General Berganzoli, his successor (right), made his escape but was captured soon after.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright ; E.N.A.





READY AID FOR WOUNDED IN THE DESERT WAR

In this hospital tent not far from the battle-front of Bardia, while a colleague administers the merciful anaesthetic the surgeon gives prompt treatment that may save the soldier's life or prevent his injury from worsening.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Bardia battle were stated to number 2,041 officers and 42,827 men killed or captured. More than 40,000 of these were prisoners. The total British and Australian casualties incurred in the capture of the place were fewer than 600. Of Graziani's original force of 250,000 men, a third, at least, were hors de combat.

Graziani's Apologia

The Italian marshal, in a report to Mussolini made shortly before Christmas, maintained that Wavell's offensive had not come as a surprise. But it had been launched at a moment when the Italians themselves were about to attack and so were occupying "indifferent positions." Graziani also declared that he was waiting for reinforcements which were due to arrive by sea and for lorries from Italy; he also stressed the part played by British air and naval forces. "Low-flying aircraft of the R.A.F.," he said, "flew over the Italian advanced lines, and, after short but terrible artillery and air bombardments, armoured cars came from almost everywhere, surrounding the Italian centres of resistance, which were overwhelmed." Graziani still professed some measure of optimism concerning the ultimate result of the battle. In this he was soon to be undeceived.

General Wavell's Order of the Day

THE result of the fighting in the Western Desert will be one of the decisive events of the war.

The crushing defeat of the Italian forces will have an incalculable effect not only upon the whole position in the Middle East, not only upon the military situation everywhere, but on the future of freedom and civilization throughout the world. It may shorten the war by very many months.

It must be the firm determination of every man to do everything that in him lies, without thought of self, to win this decisive victory.

In everything but numbers we are superior to the enemy. We are more highly trained, we shoot straighter, we have better equipment. Above all, we have stouter hearts, greater traditions, and we are fighting for a worthier cause. The Italians entered the war treacherously, without a reason, because they expected a cheap and easy victory. Let us show them their mistake by inflicting on them a stern and costly defeat.

Mr. Winston Churchill has sent us every wish for good fortune in this fighting, and his assurance that all the acts, decisions, valour, and violence against the enemy will, whatever their upshot, receive the resolute support of his Majesty's Government. We have waited long in the Middle East; when our chance comes let us strike hard. The harder the blows we strike against these servants of tyranny and selfish lust for power the sooner we shall bring peace and freedom back into the world and be able to return to our own free, peaceful homes.



USE OF PROTECTIVE COLOURING IN THE DESERT

In white overall and hood, with his weapon similarly masked until the moment comes for action, this Bren gunner in the Western Desert is on the look-out for hostile aircraft. At need he can disappear into his hole in the sand, to emerge like a Jack-in-the-box and pepper the enemy 'plane.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Chapter 132

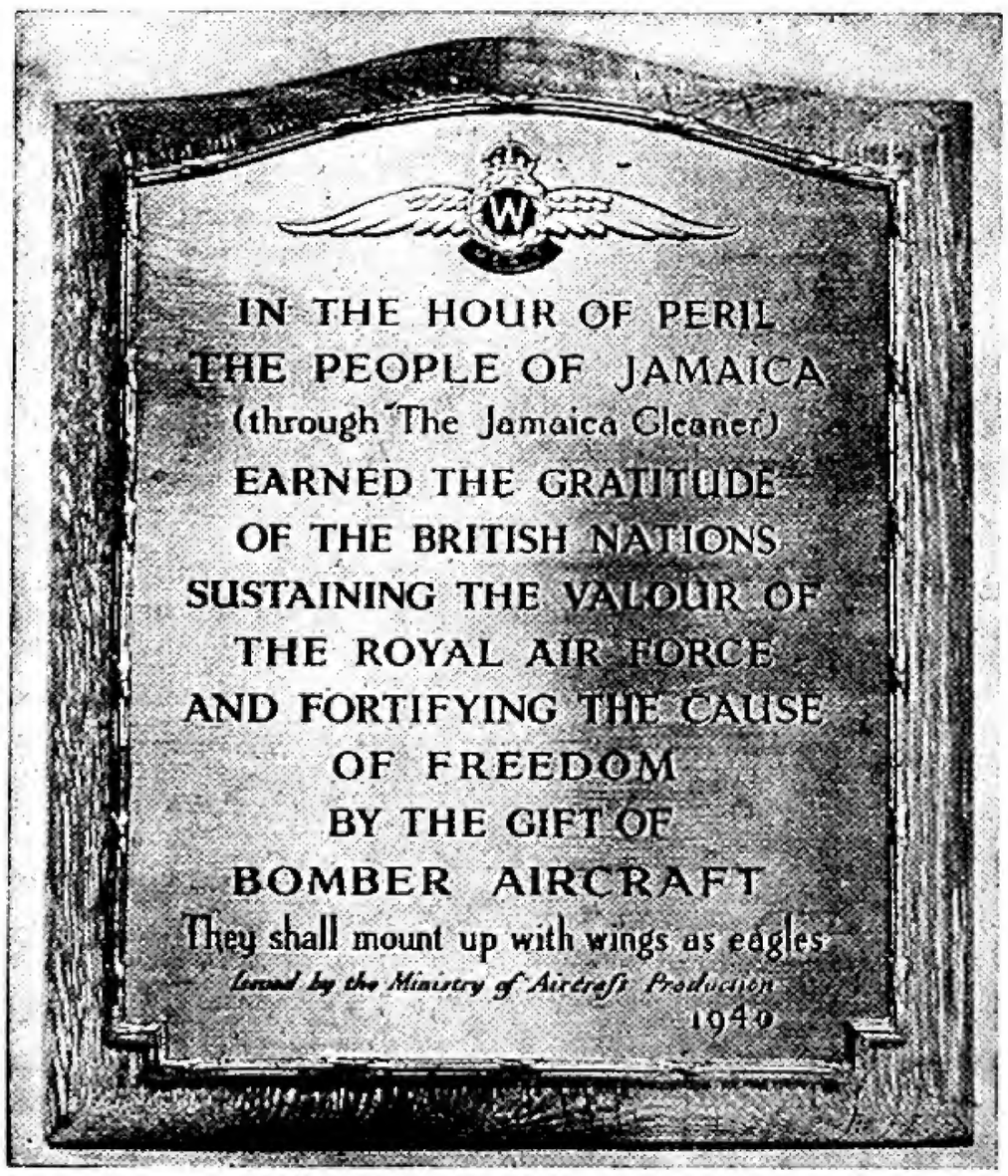
EMPIRE AIR TRAINING SCHEME: THE FIRST YEAR'S WORK REVIEWED

A Bold and Important Conception—Canada the Focus of the Scheme—Safe Training Grounds for Air Crews—How Personnel Were Trained—Dominions Made Air Frames and Engines—Review of a Year's Progress—Achievements in Canada—Australia's Splendid Contribution—Some Outstanding Achievements of the Trainees

THE conception of the Empire Air Training Scheme was as bold as it was important, and the broad plan was completed and the agreements between the Governments concerned signed with commendable speed very shortly after the declaration of war. It was on December 17, 1939, that representatives of the Governments of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand appended their signatures to the document in Ottawa, and so left the way clear for those charged with the responsibility of setting in action the vast and complicated machinery. Only by means of air travel could the Dominion representatives have got together so quickly for their conference.

The Empire Air Training Scheme at its inauguration was put under the control of a Board composed of the following members: Hon. Norman Rogers, then Canadian Minister of National Defence (Chairman); Col. J. L. Ralston, Canadian Minister of Finance; Hon. C. D. Howe, Canadian Minister of Transport; Col. K. S. Maclachlan, Acting Deputy Minister of National Defence in the Canadian Government; Air Vice-Marshal G. M. Croil, Chief of the Air Staff; Sir Gerald Campbell, Canadian High Commissioner for the United Kingdom; Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, Chief Air Liaison Officer; and Keith Officer, representing the Government of Australia.

The Scheme was a result of the obvious importance of the air arm in modern warfare, and the desire of the Dominions to stand with the United Kingdom in resisting to the utmost all attempts to destroy Democracy. Broadly, its object was to train very large numbers of air crew in the Dominions, and then to bring them to England for their operational training before going into combat. The technical advantages of such an arrangement lay in the facts that the training schools and aerodromes were out of range of air attack, that there was an abundance of aerodrome sites in the wide spaces (England, in terms of aerodromes, is almost overcrowded now), and that the better climates in the Dominions made a greater amount of flying time available.



JAMAICA GAVE BOMBER AIRCRAFT

This plaque was issued by the Ministry of Aircraft Production in December, 1940, to commemorate the gift of £75,000 for the building of bombers for the Royal Air Force. The letter 'W' stands for 'Workmanship.' See illustration in page 1401.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

The Scheme was later found to have another advantage, not then foreseen—it kept out of England the large personnel involved in instructing, maintenance, manufacture, and administration, a circumstance desirable because of the blockade.

Three years was the minimum period for which the Scheme was regarded as being necessary; the total cost was estimated at £150,000,000, to be borne in the proportion of Canada £90,000,000, Australia £40,000,000, and New Zealand £20,000,000. The contribution of the United Kingdom was not defined in monetary terms, but it was agreed that training aircraft and engines would be supplied in certain specified numbers. It is now apparent that the final cost will total nearly £250,000,000.

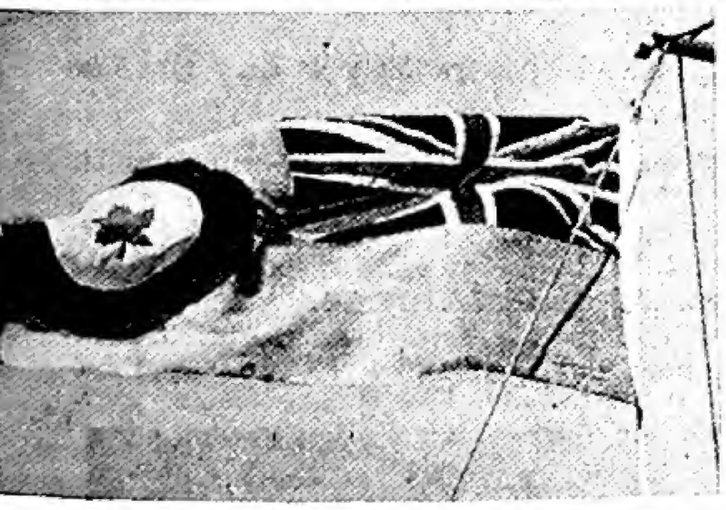
Canada was awarded the most important role, quite rightly, on account of her close proximity to England and her status as the largest Dominion. (The relative populations in millions are Canada 11, Australia 7, and New Zealand 1½.)

The Scheme as originally projected was on a vast scale, and statements were made of the number of air crew which would be trained. As, however, these statements sometimes omitted to make clear whether the number given was for the three years planned for or per year, and as they varied both with time and the spokesman, it was very difficult to obtain a definite idea of the objective of the Scheme. It is likely also that the number to be trained each year could not be estimated with very great accuracy, since no training plan of such magnitude or even of such a kind had ever before existed.

One figure put the number of pilots to be trained each year at 20,000 for the whole scheme. An Australian statement said that that Dominion would train 16,000 pilots and air crew in three years. The New Zealand quota was put at 10,000, presumably inclusive of pilots and other air crew. The number of total personnel involved in the Scheme could be gauged to some extent from the Canadian figure of approximately 39,000 for the staff required in that country. This was made up as follows: 2,700 officers, 6,000 civilians, 30,300 men for servicing aircraft and other duties. Truly a scheme of gigantic conception, but no bigger than required to beat the Axis in the air.

All recruits were enlisted into the ranks, and no commissions could be granted until the volunteers had passed

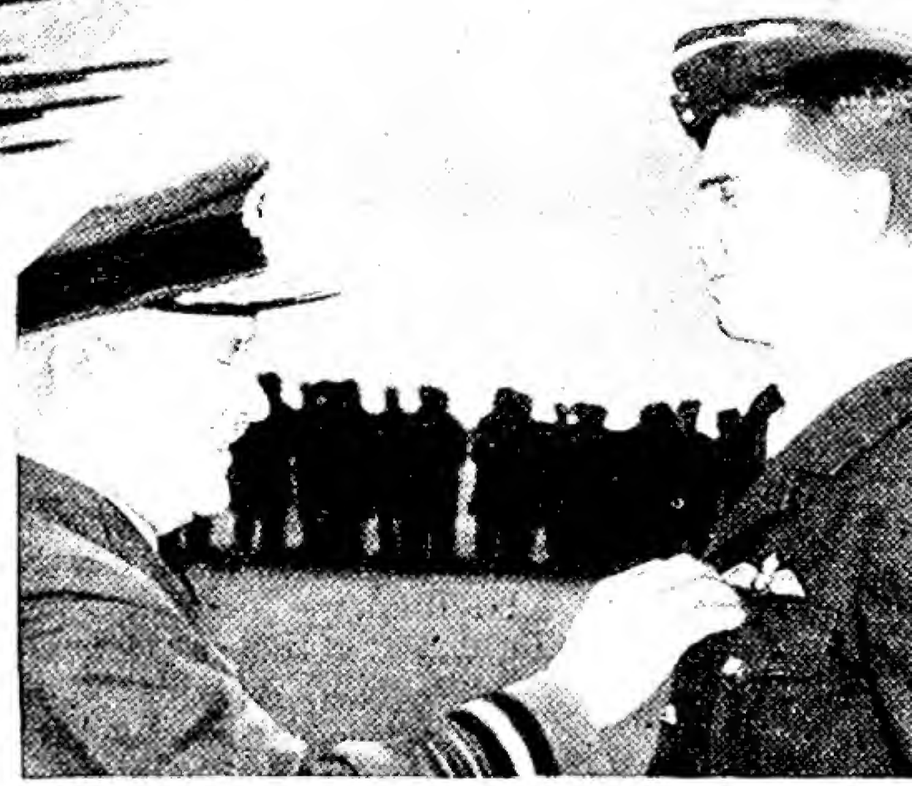


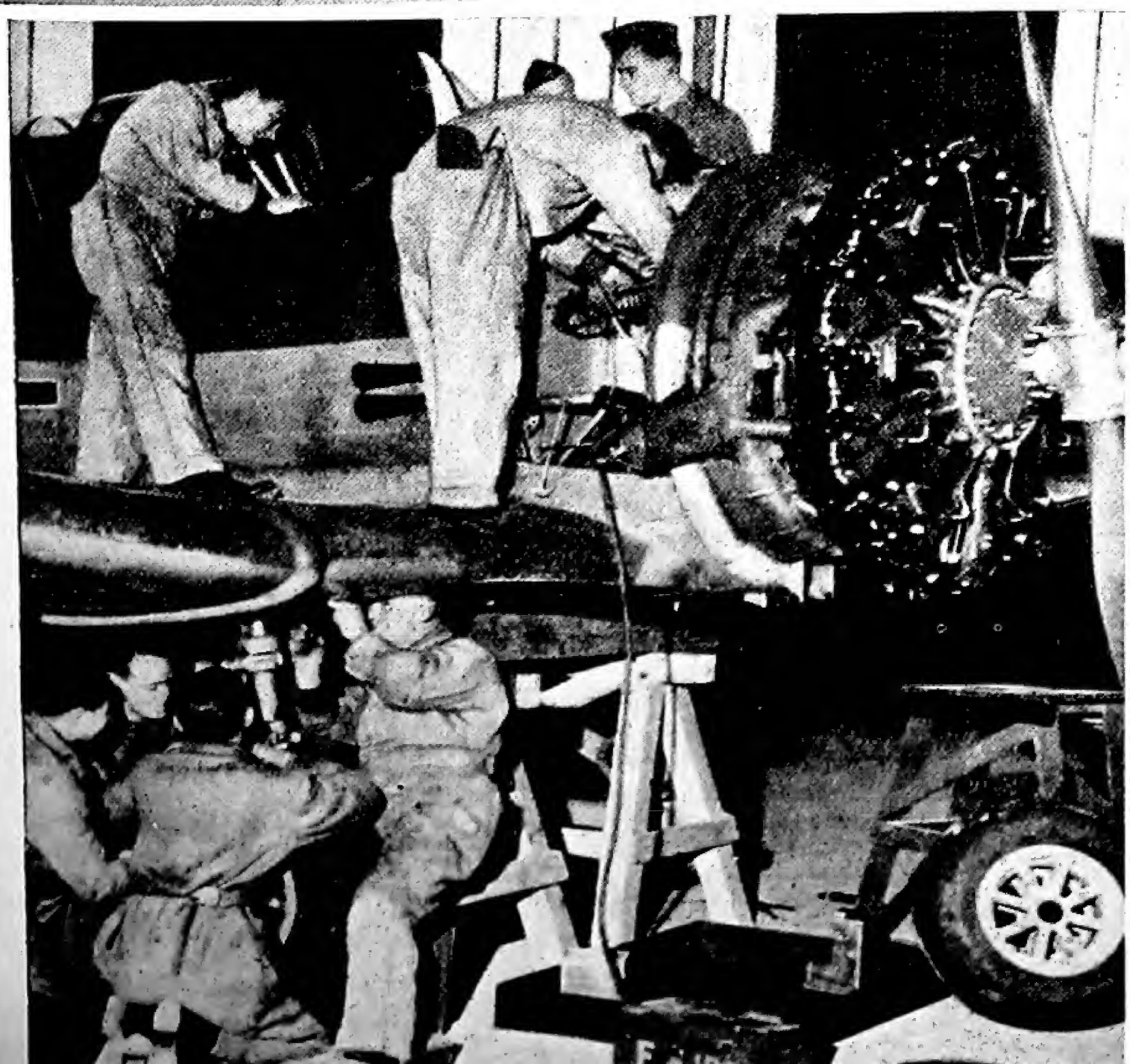


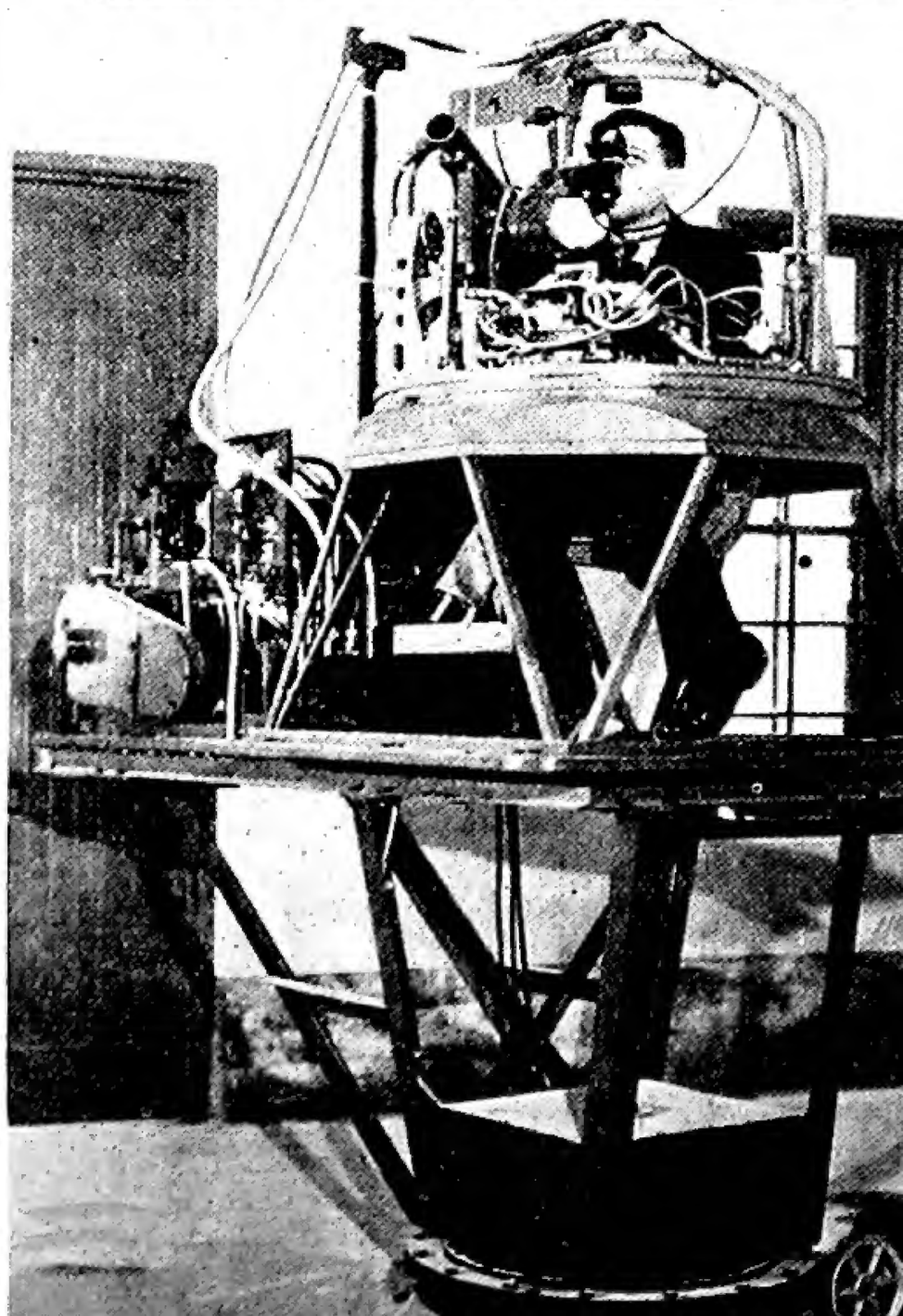
CANADA'S PART IN AIR TRAINING

From 3,800 at the outbreak of war the Royal Canadian Air Force increased in less than two years to some 68,000 officers and men (30,000 under the Air Training Plan). Here are aspects of training late in 1940. Top, N.C.O. pilots march past Yale Trainers after getting their Wings (Camp Borden, Ontario) ; left, Flag of the R.C.A.F. ; right, Air Marshal Billy Bishop, V.C., fixes the newly won Wings on the tunic of a Leading Aircraftman ; below, students at St. Thomas, Ontario, do maintenance work ; and (right) spotlight training for gunnery students at Jarvis, Ontario.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright ; Planet News









CANADIANS WHO BATTLED FOR BRITAIN

Men of the 'Readiness Flight' race to their Hurricanes. No. 1 Fighter Squadron of the R.C.A.F., to which they belong, arrived in Britain in June, 1940, and played a prominent part in the defence of London during that strenuous autumn when the Luftwaffe was so signally defeated. The Squadron accounted for more than 70 enemy aircraft, bringing down 47 in four days.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

through their complete training. The first stage was a period of four weeks at an Initial Training School, where all entrants, whether they were finally turned out as pilots, navigator-bomb aimers, or radio operator-air gunners, underwent physical culture, drill and ground instruction in aviation. Then the different types of air crew separated, the pilots going to an Elementary Flying Training School (E.F.T.S.), where they learned to fly and do aerobatics to a total of about 50 hours' dual and solo on trainers such as Tiger Moths and Fleet Trainers.

First Stage in Training

This part of the training occupied eight weeks, after which the pilots went to a Service Flying Training School for a period of fourteen weeks' intermediate and advanced training on North American Harvards and Yales, Noorduyn Norsemen, Fairey Battles and Avro Ansons. The objective in this period was 50 hours each of intermediate and advanced flying, successful trainees then receiving their "wings."

Navigator-bomb aimers, whose air duties also included photography and gunnery, did twelve weeks at an Air Observers' School, then six weeks at a Bombing and Gunnery School, followed by four weeks on advanced navigation. Radio operator-air gunners had sixteen weeks at a Wireless School and finished with four weeks bombing and gunnery. All this instruction brought the air crew up to the stage when they met again at the Operational Training Units (O.T.U.) and flew together as a team on the actual aircraft to be used in combat. Only pilots were concerned with the single-seat fighter O.T.U., but at the bomber and twin-engined fighter O.T.U.s all three classes of air crew met and were welded together for their work. The O.T.U.s were in England and were outside the Empire Air Training Scheme, which ended with the S.F.T.S.

Trainees' pay while they were in their own Dominion was at rates applicable in that Dominion, but changed to Royal Air Force rates when they embarked for the United Kingdom. Pilots in training were ranked as Leading Aircraftmen and became Sergeants when they received their "wings." Other air crew were Aircraftmen Class II in training, with possible promotion to Leading Aircraftmen when trained. Some commissions were granted to all three classes of air crew after passing through the Scheme.

Trainees' Rates of Pay

The Canadian rates per day were as follows:

Aircraft Apprentice, $1; Aircraftman II, $1.30; Aircraftman I, $1.40; Leading Aircraftman, $1.50; Corporal, $1.70; Sergeant, $2.20. Flight-Sergeant, $2.50; Warrant Officer II, $3.10; Warrant Officer I, $4.20. Airmen received an additional 75 cents per day if ordered to fly. A Pilot



EAGER AIRMEN FROM SOUTHERN RHODESIA

In August, 1940, the first contingent of Rhodesian airmen arrived at a Scottish port on their way to join the Royal Air Force, under the Empire Air Training Scheme. They were destined to become part of the technical and maintenance personnel of Rhodesian fighter and bomber units later formed in Britain. Addressing the men is Mr. Lanigan O'Keefe, High Commissioner in London for Southern Rhodesia.

Photo, Keystone

Officer received $4.25 per day; Flying Officer, $5.00; Flight-Lieutenant, $6.50. (The Canadian dollar then stood at $4.54 to £1 sterling.)

The Australian rates expressed in Australian currency were :

Aircraftman I, 10s. ; Leading Aircraftman, 10s. 6d. : Corporal, 11s. ; Sergeant, 12s. : Flight-Sergeant, 13s. : Warrant Officer, 13s. 6d. In addition, flying pay was awarded at the rate of 4s. per day continuously for Airmen Pilots and Navigators, 2s. 6d. for Air Gunners, and 2s. for Radio Operators, the two latter rates being only while flying. (The Australian pound was equal to 16s. sterling).

Dominions Make Airframes

The orginal draft of the Scheme provided that the United Kingdom would supply aero engines to Canada for the trainers (Tiger Moths and Fleets), which would be built there. The United Kingdom also undertook to supply to Canada 870 aircraft for assembly, and 1,622 Anson fuselages. To Australia and New Zealand were to go Fairey Battles, Avro Ansons and engines. Australia and Canada have growing aircraft industries, and it was arranged that as much use as possible of these would be made. Both these Dominions and New Zealand could supply their own needs in Tiger Moth airframes, and Australia arranged to make Gipsy engines. In addition,



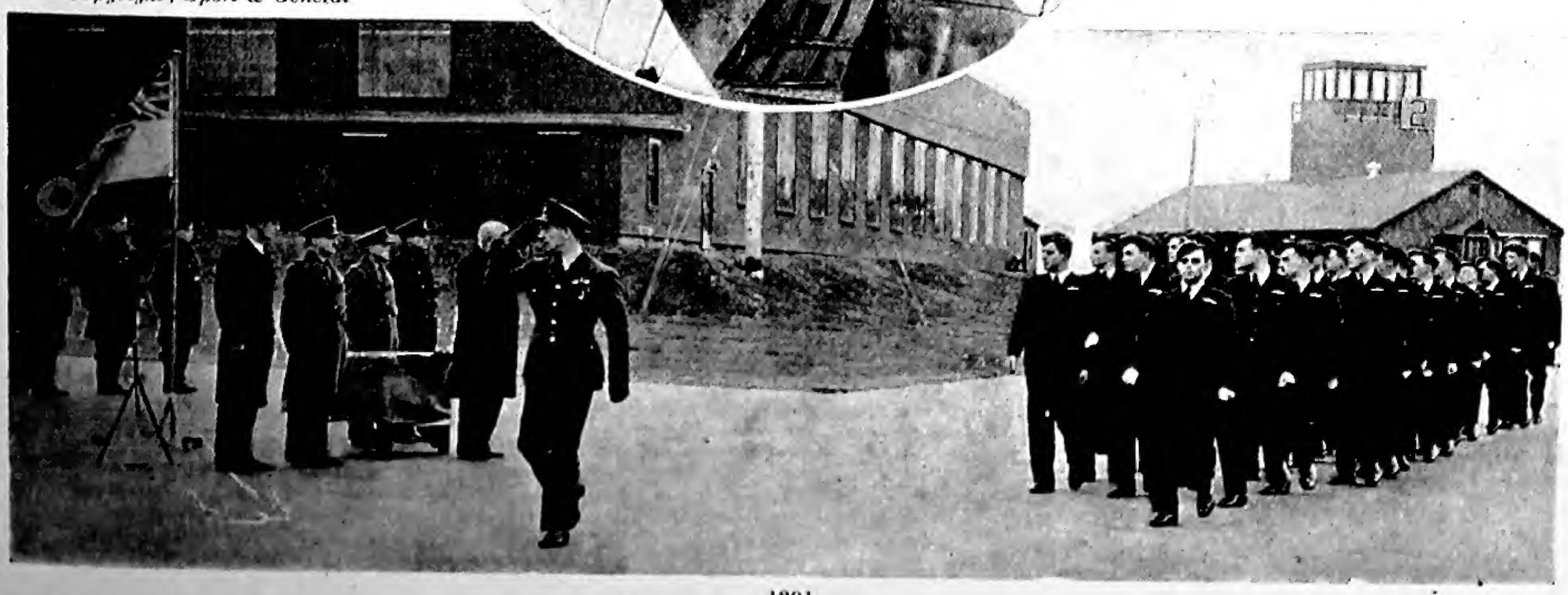
AUSTRALIAN PUPIL-PILOTS IN TRAINING

Top, pupils at an Australian Elementary Flying Training School march out for an instructional flight. The next stage under the Empire Air Training Scheme will be Advanced Training, undergone at a Canadian centre ; on completion of this the pilots will enter Service squadrons.

WINGS AND WINGED VICTORY

Below, the first Australian pilots to complete training in Canada march past the Australian High Commissioner, after receiving their Wings. In circle, an Australian fighter pilot about to take off on patrol over Bardia during the final thrust in January, 1941.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright ; Sport & General



Australia produced its own intermediate trainer in the shape of the Wirraway (the Harvard under another name), and also made the Pratt and Whitney engines for these. Canada was able to draw on the U.S.A.



NEW ZEALANDERS IN TRAINING

A transparent half-model of the globe before them, these Observers with an Operational Training Unit are being instructed in the details of Great Circle navigation and course-plotting. Later they will serve in bomber squadrons of the R.A.F.

Photo, Fox

for its Harvards and Yales, and for some of its engine requirements.

During its first year the Scheme underwent some modifications. Though some Ansons had been sent out to Canada before, the shortage of aircraft at the fall of France in June, 1940, practically curtailed all shipments, as even Fairey Battles were urgently needed in the British theatre of war. Though shipments were resumed to some extent later, the Dominions were forced to rely more on their own industries.

Rhodesia Added to Scheme

A great change was the addition of Rhodesia to the Scheme in January, 1940. It was arranged that the equipment and the majority of the instructors and pupils would be sent from the United Kingdom, which would also bear most of the cost. Australia agreed to increase her quota of trainees by sending some to receive all their flying training in Rhodesia. Three schools were set up, two being at Salisbury and Bulawayo.

A change in training occurred in August, 1940, when the Board in Canada announced that, at the request of the United Kingdom, the elementary flying training period of eight weeks was to be reduced to seven, and the radio operator-air gunners' period of 24 weeks was to be cut down to 18 weeks. Another major change was the increase in the number of Canadian schools to be established—from 64 to 116.

Starting soon after the signing of the agreement in December, 1939, announcements following each other at short intervals during 1940 showed that steady progress was being made:

January.	Rhodesia brought into the Scheme. Seventy-one R.A.F. officers and 200 airmen arrive in Canada as instructional staff.
February.	Contracts for trainers let to Fleet and De Havilland Aircraft companies in Canada.
March.	Till Empire Scheme starts, R.C.A.F. continues with training and turns out first pilots completely trained since outbreak of war.
April.	First Empire Air schools in Canada and Australia opened.
May.	First Avro Ansons arrive in Canada from England.
June.	First batch of trainees leaves an I.T.S. in Australia.
July.	Canada reports that 22 schools are in operation, and the first pupils enter an S.F.T.S.
October.	Seven E.F.T. Schools in operation in Australia.
November.	First batch of recruits completes training in Rhodesia. First batch of Australians goes to Canada.
December.	First group of pilots and other air crew trained wholly under the Scheme arrives in England from Canada.

The Scheme in Canada was organized under four Commands: No. 1 in Toronto, No. 2 in Winnipeg, No. 3 in Montreal, and No. 4 in Regina. Recruits were enlisted into these Commands and underwent their instruction. It was in October, 1940, that the first pilots completed their training; they then left for England, where they arrived in December. In October there were 4,932 recruits under training in Canada. The progress made can be gauged by reference to the table of schools, given here by courtesy of "Canadian Aviation."

EMPIRE AIR TRAINING SCHEME: Details of the Canadian Schools

	Operating Dec. 31, 1940	Original Scheme	Revised Scheme
Flying Units:			
Central Flying School ..	1	1	1
Elementary Flying Schools	16	8	26
Service Flying Schools ..	8	5	16
Air Observers' Schools ..	4	4	10
Bombing and Gunnery Schools	3	2	10
Wireless Schools	2	2	4
Air Navigation Schools ..	1	1	2
Non-flying Units:			
Air Armament School ..	1	1	1
Motorboat Crewmen's School	1	0	1
Equipment and Accounting School	1	1	1
School of Administration ..	1	1	1
A.I.D. Inspectors' School ..	1	1	1
School of Aeronautical Engineering	1	1	1
Technical Training School	1	1	1
Manning Depots	4	2	4
Initial Training Schools ..	2	2	3
Auxiliary Units:			
Training Commands	4	4	4
Equipment Depots	4	4	4
Repair Depots	3	3	4
Technical Detachments ..	4	0	4
Recruiting Centres	17	20	17
Totals ..	80	64	116







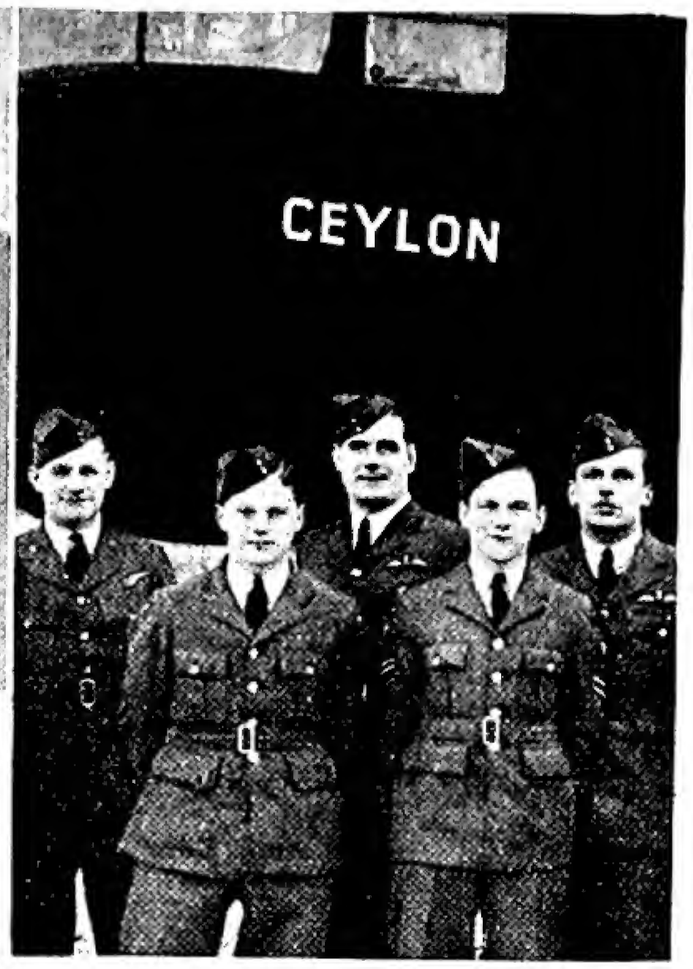
AIR ACES FROM CANADA AND SOUTH AFRICA

Flight-Lieutenant (later Wing-Cmdr.) John A. Kent, A.F.C., D.F.C. with bar (left), came from Winnipeg and commanded a flight in a Polish Fighter Squadron which, by the end of October, 1940, had destroyed well over 100 enemy aircraft. Pilot-Officer Albert G. Lewis, a 23-year-old South African, distinguished himself in the Battle of Britain by bringing down five enemy machines in one day. For this outstanding feat he was awarded the D.F.C. Later his 'bag' rose to 30 and in the autumn of 1941 he served with the R.A.F. in Russia. Squadron Leader (later Wing-Cmdr.) A. G. Malan, another South African who won the D.S.O. and D.F.C. with bar, by mid-1941 had shot down 35 German 'planes.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Associated Press; Fox







FROM GOLD COAST, BURMA, AND CEYLON

Left, painting a town name on one of a squadron of bombers subscribed for by the Gold Coast. Centre, Squadron Leader Tuck, D.S.O., D.F.C. and bar, in a Hurricane of No. 257 Fighter Squadron, which was adopted by Burma. Ceylon gave and named the Whitley Bomber seen at right.

Australia's share was 16,000 pilots and air crew by March, 1943; a good beginning was made, and over 4,000 were in training on November 11, 1940. At the end of the year 12,576 pilot and air crew recruits had been selected for training, and also 25,726 staff for maintenance and other ground work. Those chosen had been picked from more than 135,000 applications. By November fifteen schools for air crew training were in operation out of the forty required, and at the end of the year the number had risen to twenty. There were also eleven schools in operation for training ground staff. The air crew schools comprised: 2 Initial Training, 8 E.F.T.S., 2 S.F.T.S., 1 Air Observer, 1 Radio Operator-Air Gunner, and 1 Bombing and Gunnery.

None of the pilots or air crew trained under the Scheme was in action up to the end of 1940, but there is no doubt that they will put up quite as good a show as their brothers in arms in the Royal Air Force or the Air Forces of the Dominions. The achievements of fighter pilots get more publicity, though the pilot and every man of the crew of a bomber or reconnaissance machine have jobs every bit as dangerous and sometimes requiring more skill. But inevitably the names of fighter pilots become known because of their spectacular deeds and the easy yardstick of prowess which can be applied—the number of enemy aircraft they have shot down.

Some Gifts for the Colonial Air Armada

Ceylon—State Council		£375,000	
"Times of Ceylon" Fund		15,000	
Private donations ...		5,000	£395,000
Malaya—"Straits Times"		227,000	
"Straits Echo"			
"Malay Mail"		45,000	272,000
Gold Coast—Government Gift		100,000	
Government Loan		500,000	
"Gold Coast Spitfire Fund"		15,000	615,000
Trinidad business men			42,000
Falkland Islands			50,000
Hong Kong—"South China Morning Post"			
"Hong Kong Telegraph"			40,662
Bengal Residents			40,000
British Guiana—Residents ...		30,000	
"Georgetown Fund" ...		10,000	40,000
Zanzibar Executive Council ...			20,000
Natal—"Speed the 'Planes Fund"			201,000
Jamaica—"Jamaica Gleaner" ...			20,000
Windward Islands—St. Vincent Arrowroot Assn.			5,000
Bahamas-Nassau—Private donations			5,000
			£1,745,662



EAST INDIA GAVE FIGHTER SQUADRONS

Out of the moneys raised by the East India Fund two squadrons of Spitfire Fighters were purchased for the Royal Air Force. Above is the Sergeant Pilot of one aircraft just back from a successful combat.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Dominion Air Aces

With 25 German aircraft to his credit during the blitzkrieg in France, the name of "Cobber" Kain will be remembered in Britain as well as in New Zealand. He met his untimely death doing farewell aerobatics before leaving for England (*see* illus. p. 943). Then there was M. T. St. J. Pattle, the South African, who received the D.F.C. in February, 1941, and a bar to it a month later, when he was credited officially with the highest total of 23 machines. A. G. Lewis, another South African, destroyed six enemy aircraft in one day during the Battle of Britain in September, 1940.

But the name which stands very high indeed, again a South African, is that of Wing Commander A. G. Malan of No. 74 Squadron. At July, 1941, Malan was credited officially with 35 enemy aircraft, as well as numerous others shared or doubtful. He is the first airman in this war to win bars to both his D.S.O. and D.F.C.

No. 1 Fighter Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force has a proud record in the defence of London against the daylight attacks of 1940 (47 machines in four days). Before that at Dunkirk an "All Canadian" Squadron with (Defiants) had destroyed 28 of the enemy.

The Australians in Britain are serving in many different squadrons of the R.A.F., and also operate Sunderland flying boats as an R.A.A.F. unit on Atlantic patrol (*see* illus. pp. 585 and 1006). In October, 1940, it was announced that "six more Australians had been awarded the D.F.C." The Australians, together with the South African Air Force, have done a great deal in the Middle East, particularly in Libya and Abyssinia.

Historic Documents. CXCVI–CXCVII

FRANCE AT THE CROSS-ROADS

We give below two important messages to the unhappy French nation—one, from Mr. Churchill, broadcast the day before Hitler disclosed to Vichy the terms on which he was prepared to make peace; the other from Marshal Pétain, his apologia for accepting the role of collaborator with the enemy.

MR. CHURCHILL, IN A MESSAGE BROADCAST TO THE FRENCH PEOPLE, OCTOBER 21, 1940:

It is I, Churchill, who am speaking. Frenchmen.—For more than thirty years in peace and war I have marched with you, and I am marching still along the same road. Tonight I speak to you at your firesides, wherever you may be, or whatever your fortunes are. I repeat the prayer around the louis d'or—"Dieu protège la France."

Here at home in England under the fire of the Boche we do not forget the ties and links that unite us to France; and we are persevering steadfastly and in good heart in the cause of European freedom. . . .

Here in London, which Herr Hitler says he will reduce to ashes, and which his aeroplanes are now bombarding, our people are bearing up unflinchingly. Our Air Force has more than held its own. We are waiting for the long promised invasion. So are the fishes. But, of course, this for us is only the beginning. Now in 1940 we have, in spite of occasional losses, as ever, the command of the seas. In 1941 we shall have command of the air. Remember what this means.

Herr Hitler, with his chars d'assaut and other mechanical weapons, and also by Fifth Column intrigue with traitors, has managed to subjugate for the time being most of the finest races in Europe, and his little Italian accomplice is trotting along hopefully and hungrily, but rather wearily, and very timidly, at his side. They both wish to carve up France and her Empire—to one a leg, to another a wing, or again a part of the breast. Not only the French Empire will be devoured by these two ugly customers. Alsace-Lorraine will go once again under the German yoke, and Nice, Savoy and Corsica—Napoleon's Corsica—will be torn from the fair realm of France.

But Herr Hitler is not thinking only of stealing other people's territories or flinging gobbets of them to his little dog. I tell you truly what you must believe. This evil man, this monstrous abortion of hatred and deceit, is resolved on nothing less than the complete wiping out of the French nation and the disintegration of its whole life and future. By all kinds of sly and savage means he is plotting and working to quench for ever the fountain of characteristic French culture and French inspiration to the world. All Europe, if he has his way, will be reduced to one uniform Bocheland, to be exploited, pillaged and bullied by his Nazi gangsters.

France Risks Complete Obliteration

You will excuse my speaking frankly, because this is not the time to mince words. It is not defeat that France will now be made to suffer at German hands, but the doom of complete obliteration. Army, Navy, Air Force, religion, laws, language, culture, institutions, literature, history, tradition—all are to be effaced by the brute strength of a triumphant army and the scientific low cunning of a ruthless police force.

Frenchmen, re-arm your spirits before it is too late. Remember how Napoleon said before one of his battles: "The same Prussians who are so boastful today were three to one at Jena and nine to one at Montmirail." Never will I believe that the soul of France is dead, or her place among the greatest nations of the world lost for ever.

All these schemes and crimes of Herr Hitler are bringing upon him and upon all who belong to his system a retribution which many of us will live to see. It will not be so long. The story is not yet finished. We are on his track, and so are our friends across the Atlantic Ocean. If he cannot destroy us, we will surely destroy him and all his gang and their works. Therefore, have hope and faith, for all will come right.

Now, what is it we British ask of you in this present hard and bitter time? What we ask at this moment in our struggle to win the victory—which we will share with you—is that, if you cannot help us, at least you will not hinder us. Presently you will be able to weight the arm that strikes for you. But even now we trust that Frenchmen, wherever they may be, will feel their hearts warmed, and a proud blood tingle in their veins when we have some success in the air or on the sea, or presently—for that will come—upon land.

Remember, we shall never stop, never weary, and never give in, and that our whole people and Empire have vowed themselves to the task of cleansing Europe from the Nazi pestilence and saving the world from the new Dark Ages.

Do not imagine, as the German-controlled wireless tells you, that we English think to take your ships and Colonies. We seek to beat the life and soul out of Hitler and Hitlerism. That alone, that all the time, that to the end. We do not covet anything from any nation except their respect.

Good-night, then. Sleep to gather strength for the morning—for the morning will come. Brightly will it shine on the brave and true; kindly on all who suffer for the cause; glorious upon the tombs of heroes. Vive la France.

MARSHAL PÉTAIN, IN A BROADCAST FROM LYONS, OCTOBER 30, 1940:

Frenchmen, a few days ago I had a meeting with the Chancellor of the Reich. This meeting raised hope and caused anxiety. I owe you an explanation on this subject. Such an interview was only possible, four months after our military defeat, thanks to the dignity of the French people in face of their ordeal and thanks to the enormous effort towards regeneration which they have made. It was only possible also thanks to the heroism of our sailors, the energy of our colonial leaders and the loyalty of the native populations. France has rallied.

The first meeting between victor and vanquished signifies the first vindication of our country. It was of my own free will that I accepted the Fuehrer's invitation. I have been under no *Diktat*, no pressure from him. Collaboration between our two countries was considered. I accepted the principles of it. The application will be discussed later.

To all those who await today the salvation of France, I wish to say that this salvation is first of all in our own hands. To all those who through well-meant scruples might be inclined to deviate from our opinions, I wish to say that the first duty of every Frenchman is to trust. Those who doubt, and those who harden their hearts, I would remind that the most praiseworthy reserve and pride, if persisted in to excess, are in danger of losing their effectiveness.

He who has taken charge of the destiny of France has the duty of creating the most favourable atmosphere to safeguard the interests of the country. It is with honour, and to maintain French unity, a unity of ten centuries, within the framework of a constructive activity of the new European order, that I enter today the path of collaboration. In the near future the load of suffering of our country may thus be lightened, the lot of our prisoners improved, the burden of occupation expenses lessened, the line of demarcation may be rendered more flexible and the administration and provisioning of the territory facilitated.

This collaboration must be sincere. All thought of aggression must be excluded from it. It must conform to a patient and deliberate effort. An armistice, after all, is not peace. France has numerous obligations towards the victor. At any rate she remains sovereign. This sovereignty imposes upon her the obligation to defend her soil.

To erase divergences of opinion, to subdue dissensions in her colonies—this is my policy. The Ministers are responsible only to me, and to me alone. And history shall judge.

Chapter 133

VICHY AND GERMAN-OCCUPIED FRANCE AFTER THE FRENCH ARMISTICE

Pétain's Broadcast on the Peace Negotiations—'Patrie, Famille, Travail'—The Vichy Cabinet—Arrest of Former Ministers—Conditions in the Occupied Region—Germanization of Alsace-Lorraine—Anti-Jew Measures—Laval, the 'Collaborator': Tortuous Intrigues—He is Dismissed by Pétain

"As between soldiers, and in honour" was the phrase used by Marshal Pétain in his broadcast to his unhappy countrymen on June 17—the broadcast in which he gave the news that he had appealed to Hitler to discuss means of ending hostilities. And he struck the same pathetic note on June 25: "The Government were of the opinion that it was their duty to ensure an acceptable armistice by making an appeal to the honour and reason of the opponent."

Scrupulous, high-minded, with an untarnished reputation as man and officer, the aged Marshal was apparently ingenuous enough still to believe that an honourable peace was possible with one for whom honour had no meaning, whose promises were snares laid for the unwary, whose solemn word was given only to be broken at the first favourable opportunity.

Some two months later, still dispirited and hardly less submissive, Marshal Pétain was telling the French people that the virtue they most needed was patience. He was fully convinced that the defeat of France was due to an inadequate and lax government, unable to guide the people who were themselves given to the pursuit of pleasure and self-interest. He formulated a "new order," the principles of which he set forth in a statement under the title "La Politique Sociale de l'Avenir," which was published in the "Revue des Deux Mondes" for September 15, and widely reprinted in the local newspapers of non-occupied France.

Pétain Counsels Patience

A strong State, he maintained, was an indispensable factor in good government, and it was his intention to build one

"on the ruins of the monstrous and flabby State which collapsed under the weight of its weaknesses and mistakes more than under the blows of the enemy. . . . In the new order which we are setting up the family will be honoured, protected, aided. . . . When our young men and our young women enter life we shall not mislead them with lofty statements and illusory hopes. We shall teach them to open their eyes to reality.

"We shall tell them that it is fine to be free; but that real 'Liberty' can be attained only in the shelter of a protecting authority which they must respect and obey. . . . We shall recognize their right to work—not, however, at any occupation they may choose, for in this domain freedom of choice will be limited within the possibilities of the economic situation and the demands of national interest. We shall then tell them that 'Equality' is a beautiful thing on certain planes and within certain limits; but that, if men are equal in the face of death, if they are equal before God, if it is the business of civilized society to make them equal before the law and to give them an equal chance in life, these different kinds of equality must be fitted into a rational hierarchy, based upon diversity of functions and merits and regulated for the common good.



SPECIOUS PROPAGANDA IN OCCUPIED FRANCE

In order to cut down the military expense of occupation and to forestall discontent that might lead to revolt, the Nazis tried to quieten the unhappy French by the use of posters such as this. It reads: 'Make Friends with the German soldier.'

"Finally, we shall tell them that 'Fraternity' is a magnificent ideal, but that in the state of nature to which we here have fallen there can be true fraternity only in natural groups such as the family, the city and the Fatherland. . . . Liberalism, capitalism and collectivism are foreign products imported into France. France, restored to herself, rejects them quite naturally. . . . When she examines the principles which made her enemies victorious, she is surprised to recognize in all of them a little of her own self, her purest and most authentic tradition. . . . We find little trouble in accepting the National Socialist idea of primacy of labour, and of its essential reality in contrast with the fiction of monetary tokens, because it is part of our national heritage."

So instead of Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité, the French youth were now taught the trinity: Patrie, Famille, Travail. Thus Pétain the idealist. But for him, also, much patience was necessary. He was still hoping that his Government might be allowed to go back to Paris, there to counter the intrigues fostered by Otto Abetz, former spy and now Hitler's representative in the occupied capital. But his requests were either ignored, or he was told to wait a little longer. Meanwhile, he did not dare to offend the conquerors in any way, lest they should vengefully extend the zone of occupation and make the lot of the 1,800,000 prisoners of war yet more intolerable.

Machinations of Otto Abetz

On September 6 Vichy had announced a reorganization of the French Cabinet which took office in July. Among the new members were General Huntziger, who succeeded General Weygand as Minister of War; M. René Belin, who took over the important position of Minister of Industry and Labour; and M. Peyrouton, who became Minister of the Interior. M. Laval, the Deputy Premier, and Admiral Darlan, Minister of Marine, who were later to play so ignoble a part in the despoiling of France, strengthened their grip on the posts they held.

The general aim of the reshuffle appeared to be to get rid of Ministers who had shown themselves more desirous of promoting relations with Mussolini and Franco—aimed at the formation of a "Latin bloc"—than setting about active cooperation with Hitler in his "New Order." General Weygand was sent to North Africa, charged with the suppression of the anti-Axis spirit, which showed signs of spreading northwards from the equatorial colonies that had rallied to the standard of Free France.

Pressure by Germany led to the arrests on September 8 of Gamelin,





GERMANIZATION OF FRANCE'S LOST PROVINCES

In November, 1940, the Germans expelled more than a hundred thousand French people from Alsace-Lorraine, giving them the option of transfer to Poland or to unoccupied France. Here are some of the refugees trying to find places on a train to France. Right, Marshal Pétain greets young refugees on arrival at Lyons.

Photos, E.N.A.; Associated Press

Daladier and Reynaud, and their incarceration in the Château de Chazeron. Shortly afterwards the "Journal Officiel" published a decree-law under which persons who were considered to be "dangerous to public security and national defence" could, by decision of local Prefects, be "administratively interned." This was followed by the first of many such internments—that of Léon Blum, the Socialist leader, who was also sent to the Château of Chazeron to await trial.

Another German-inspired measure was introduced when Vichy decided to create a court-martial under a President and four judges which, independently of the Supreme Court at Riom, was empowered to deal with crimes "threatening the unity and security of the State" which, by their nature, would not need lengthy investigation, and to impose sentences of imprisonment and even the death penalty.

In a still further attempt to propitiate Berlin and Rome, Marshal Pétain decided to sever diplomatic relations with Governments "who no longer exercise authority in their respective countries, which are occupied by German armed forces, and who are no longer resident therein." As a beginning, relations were broken off with the Netherlands.

Meanwhile, M. Bouthillier, the Minister of Finance, stated on September 13 that maintenance of the German army of occupation would cost the French 400,000,000 francs (20,000,000 marks) a day, payable as from June 23, when the Armistice came into force.

The population received this news in apathetic silence. Still bewildered by the disaster of overwhelming defeat, cowed by the ruthless pillaging of their cities and homesteads, harassed by restrictions, prohibitions and penalties, the bulk of the people were more concerned with the immediate problem of getting enough to eat. Foodstuffs were running very short. The Government gave a number of reasons for this, including the destruction and deterioration of crops and livestock in the war zone, the poor harvest in non-occupied France, the spread of foot-and-mouth disease in certain areas, and a very much decreased production of milk; they did not mention the real reason—that the country was being drained by the Nazis.

It was announced that from September 23 the rations throughout the entire country would be as follows: meat, 12½ oz. a week; cheese, 1¾ oz. a week; fats, 3¼ oz. a week; bread, 12¼ oz. a day; sugar 17½ oz. a month; rice (only for children), 3½

Après avoir complété cette carte strictement réservée à la correspondance d'ordre familial, biffer les indications inutiles. — Ne rien écrire en dehors des lignes.

ATTENTION. — Toute carte dont le libellé ne sera pas uniquement d'ordre familial ne sera pas acheminée et sera probablement détruite.

——— ....., le ..... 194.. ———

..... en bonne santé ..... fatigué

..... légèrement, gravement malade, blessé,

..... tué, ... prisonnier.

..... décédé ..... sans nouvelles.

de ..... La famille ..... va bien.

..... besoin de provisions ..... d'argent,

nouvelles, bagages ..... est de retour à .....

..... travaille à ..... va entrer

à l'école de ..... a été reçu

..... aller à ..... le .....

.....

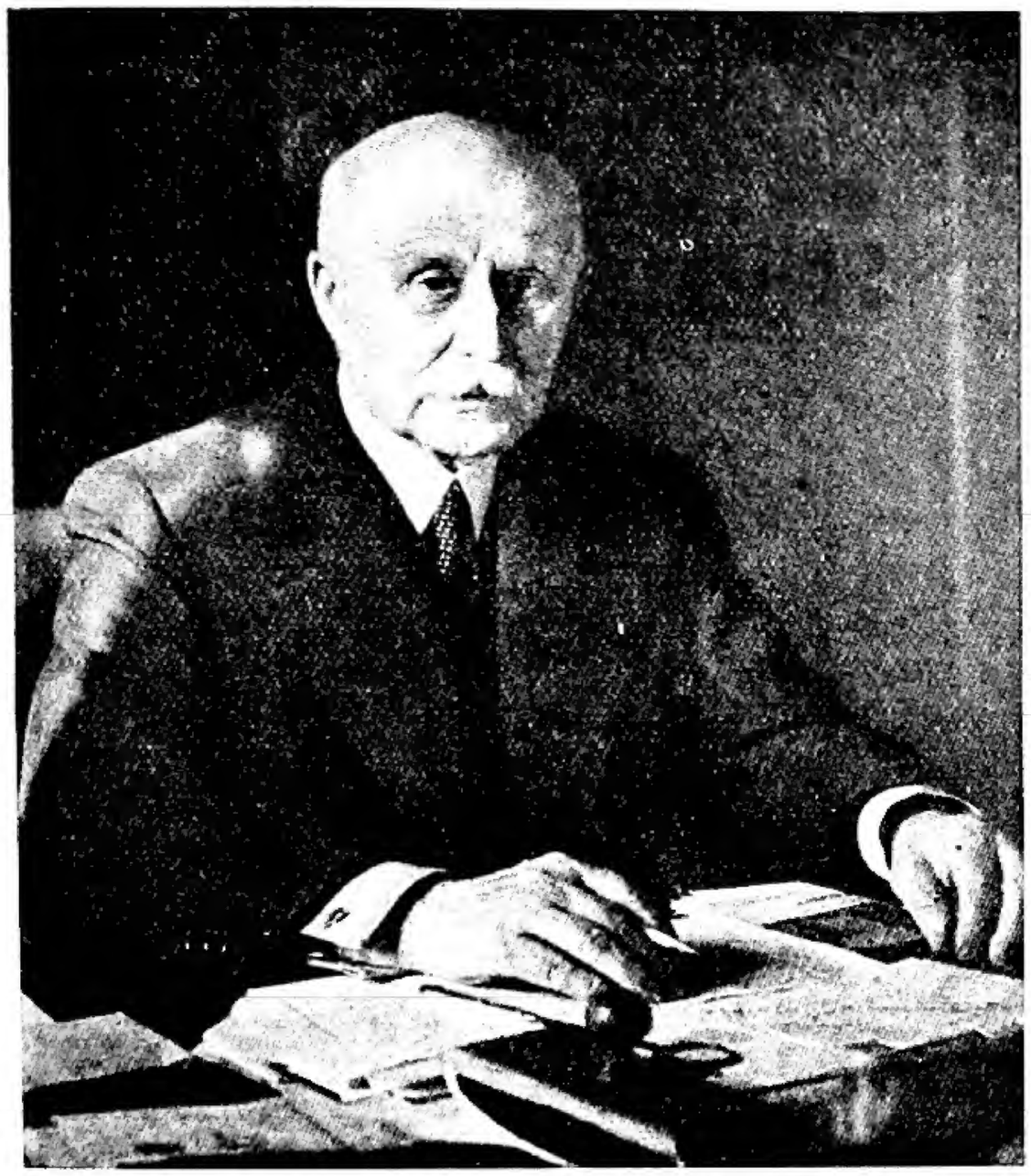
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Affectueuses pensées. Baisers. *Signature,*

FROM OCCUPIED FRANCE TO THE UNOCCUPIED ZONE

The only means of communication permitted by the Germans between that part of France which they occupied and the regions still nominally free was the postcard seen here. Unwanted phrases could be deleted, but nothing might be added. The card was sold in French Post Offices for 90 centimes.

Courtesy of "Daily Telegraph"



Marshal Pétain, Premier in the Vichy Government.



Otto Abetz, Hitler's representative in Paris.



Pierre Laval, arch-intriguer.



Ferdinand de Brinon, Ambassador in Paris.

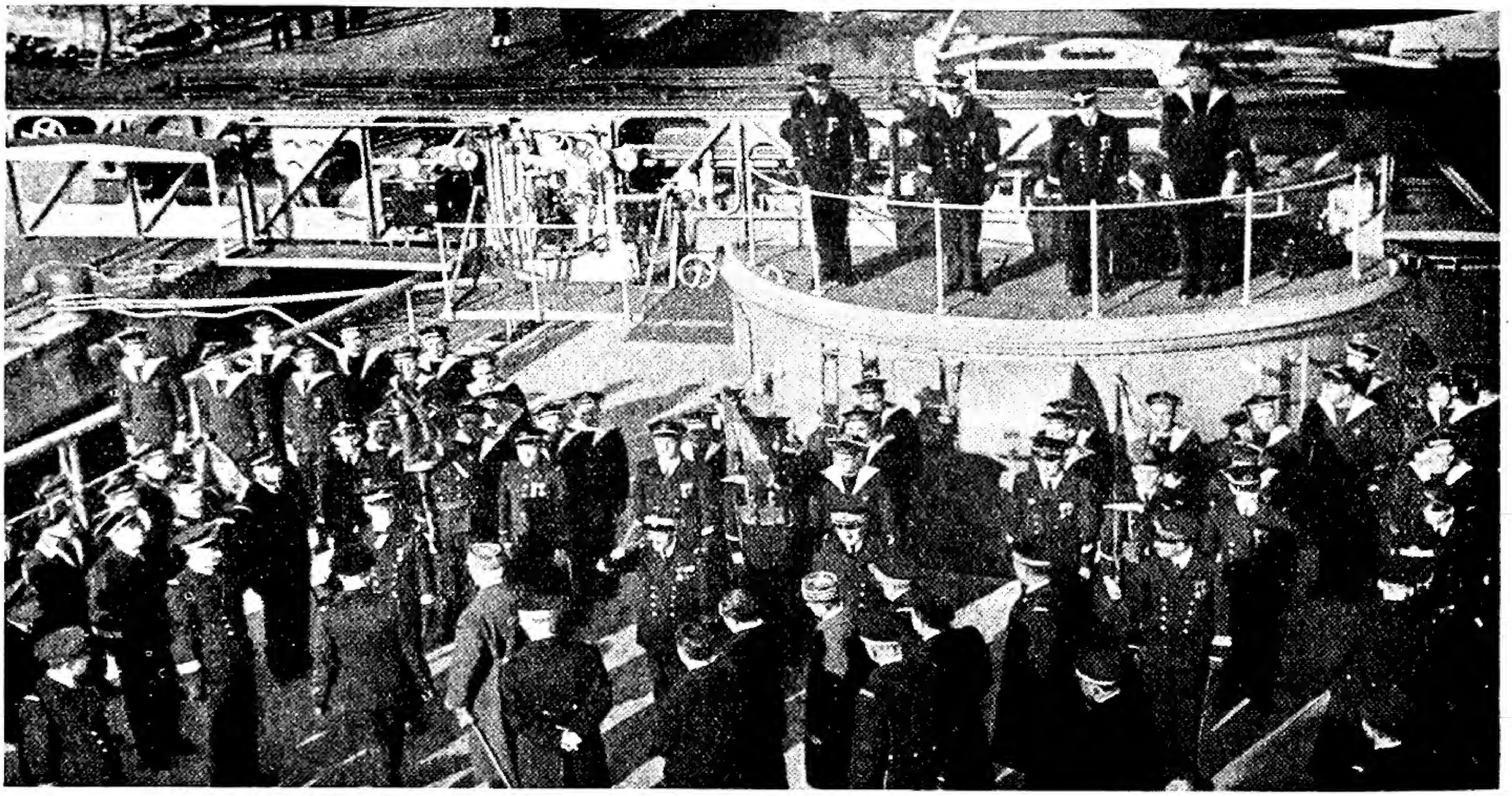
INTRIGUES OF LAVAL

On December 14, 1940, Marshal Pétain startled France by his broadcast announcement that Laval had been dismissed from the Cabinet and replaced as Foreign Minister by Flandin ; the Act of Constitution by which Pétain had appointed Laval as his own successor was cancelled. Laval, so it was said, had planned to overthrow the Vichy Government ; it was known that he worked feverishly for more active 'collaboration' with the Nazis. Ferdinand de Brinon, his intimate friend, had been appointed 'French Ambasador' to the Nazis at Paris on November 4. Otto Abetz, Hitler's representative in Paris, had fostered Laval's traitorous intrigues. General Maxime Weygand was sent to North Africa in September to check an incipient anti-Axis trend there.

E.N.A. ; Associated Press ; Wide World



General Maxime Weygand.



MEMORIES OF THE 'MELANCHOLY ACTION' AT ORAN

On December 4, 1940, Marshal Pétain with Admiral Darlan visited the battleship 'Strasbourg' in Toulon harbour, and is here seen addressing officers who took part in the action at Dakar on July 4, 1940 As related in Chapter 105, the 'Strasbourg' evaded British warships and slipped away from Mers-el-Kebir. Though pursued by aircraft she was able to reach Toulon.

Photo, Associated Press

oz. a month. Sea fishing was difficult because of mines and submarines in the Mediterranean, and for weeks fish was unobtainable even at ports, and rarely reached inland towns. No further supplies of coffee or rice were entering France. Toilet soap was manufactured only in extremely small quantities, with a fat content of 30 per cent as against the former 72 per cent, and the tiny allowance of about 4 oz. per person per month was reported to be endangering health.

Even more disturbing than the food rationing was the prospect of a coal famine in the winter. Germany was in control of the principal coal mines, all situated in the occupied zone, while the twenty million or so tons formerly imported from England, Poland and elsewhere were naturally no longer available. So dark indeed was the economic outlook that Marshal Pétain later broadcast an appeal for contributions to a "winter help" campaign modelled on the German "Winterhilfe."

Fuel Shortage in France

Mr. Lloyd Lehrbos, an American journalist who returned to New York in October after three months in France observing life under the Vichy Government, reported (according to "The Times") that "unoccupied France is living on beds of thorns and short rations, mourning for her dead and her past glory, and dreading every hour of the future."

He found the people shocked into a stupor by the war, with only a faint hope of the nation's resurrection unless Germany were defeated. They were still too shocked, he wrote, to foresee "whether France will some day again be a free nation, or be ruled by a dictator, or degenerate into a German colony. Their immediate concern is whether they will starve or freeze to death this winter. . . . While the average Frenchman in good health will probably survive the winter . . . there is considerable apprehension concerning infants and children."

Letters, somehow smuggled to French people in America from relations and friends at home, told the same grim tale.

"People fight each other standing in the queue for potatoes, they are so impatient and so hungry. This is not a wise thing to do, as we are watched by the Germans."

"At first we found the inhabitants surprised by the politeness and restraint of the Germans in the occupied territory. We did not realize that this was a command performance. Many of us thought business would begin again, and believed in Franco-German collaboration. The systematic pillage which the Germans undertook when they introduced a monetary system of one mark having the value of 20 francs opened everybody's eyes."

"Trucks which nightly move furniture from the most beautiful apartments in Paris, bring back German families who settle here en masse. We understand that these Germans have fled from the bombardment the R.A.F. inflicts on Germany, which they cannot stand. . . . Apart from the families that come here temporarily because of the raids, there are a great number whom Germany installs in Northern France for the purpose of Nazifying the country. They handle the whole thing as a colonization project, and they are hated."

In Alsace-Lorraine Germanization of the population was well under way. Over 100,000 French-speaking people had been deported from Lorraine, and similar exile was being enforced on French-speaking Alsatians, while German families were brought in from the over-populated Saar and Ruhr regions to occupy the homes and farms which the French had been forced to abandon.

The German authorities had evidently decided that Metz was to become an important city in the Reich, and an extensive rebuilding programme was announced. This included a central Via Triumphalis 120 feet wide, to be flanked by monumental buildings in the new architectural style favoured by Hitler. New motor highways encircling the entire city would link it with the Reichs-Autobahn from Germany.

Throughout Alsace-Lorraine all persons with French surnames who



WHEN MARSHAL PETAIN VISITED MARSEILLES

Though Pétain (behind and to the right of whom can be seen the enigmatic Admiral Darlan) received what might pass for a tumultuous welcome when he visited Marseilles in December, 1940, a closer scrutiny reveals among the crowd many who did not give the quasi-Nazi salute. Some, indeed, stood with half-bowed head as if still stunned and stupefied by the dreadful calamity that had befallen their beloved country.

Photo, Keystone

SPRINGBOK AIRMEN SWEEP THE EAST AFRICAN SKIES

Founded in 1920, the South African Air Force already held a high reputation for efficiency when, in the East African campaign of 1940-41, Afrikaner airmen came into their own. Above, loading up a South African bomber, in this case a converted Junkers air-liner purchased by the Union before the war. Below is an incongruous but not infrequent scene on the Kenya border at this time—a wrecked Savoia-Marchetti 81.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright : Movietone News



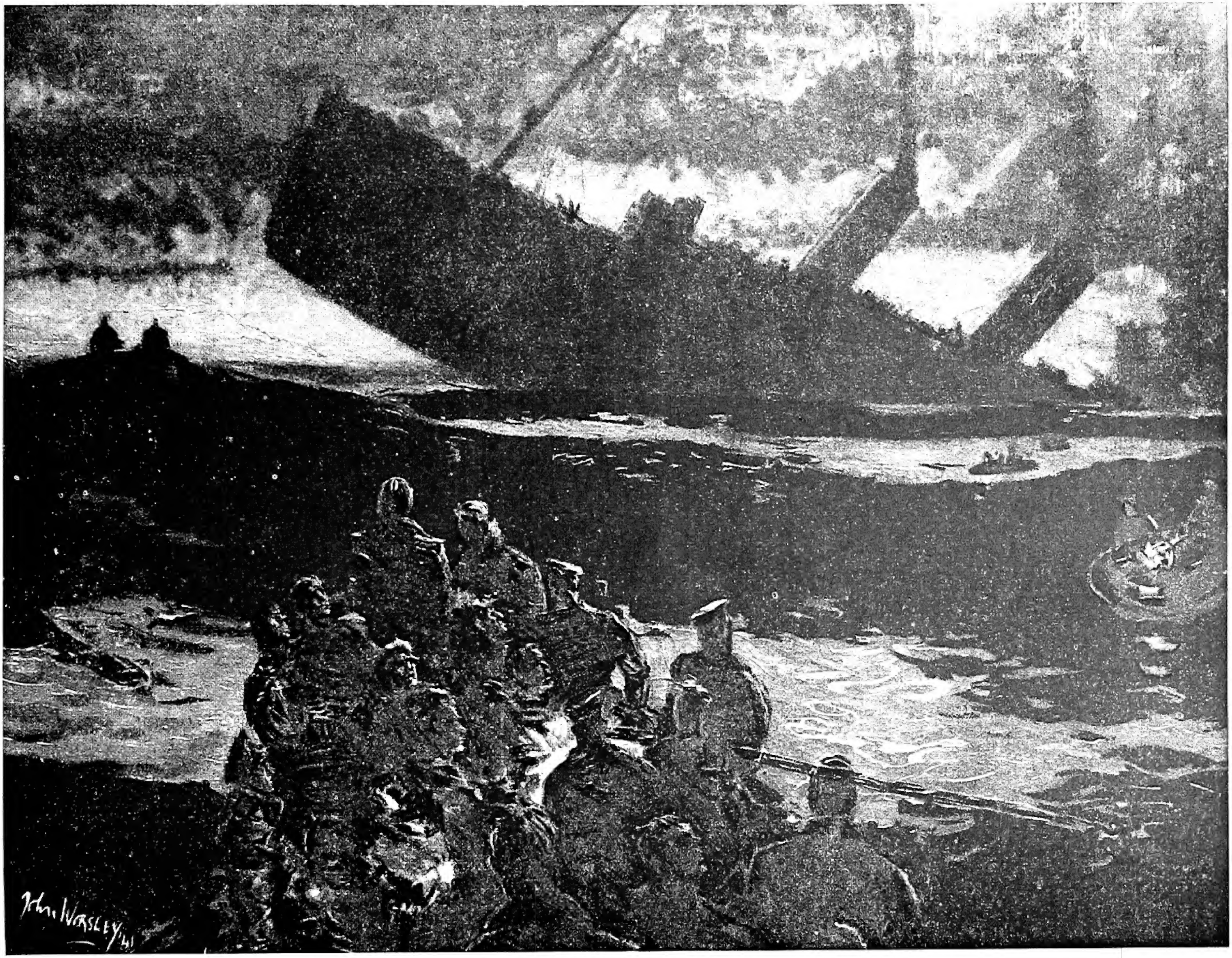
FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH CAME THE EMPIRE'S WARPLANES

Generous contributions from every part of the British Commonwealth purchased many additional aircraft for the R.A.F., often amounting to a complete squadron from one source alone. Here, bomber crews of the Jamaica Squadron are being 'briefed' for an operation (see also illus. p. 1388), and below, Rhodesian ground staff checking over a fighter of the Natal Squadron. Freely translated, the Zulu motto of this unit reads 'On Ahead!'

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright: Planet News



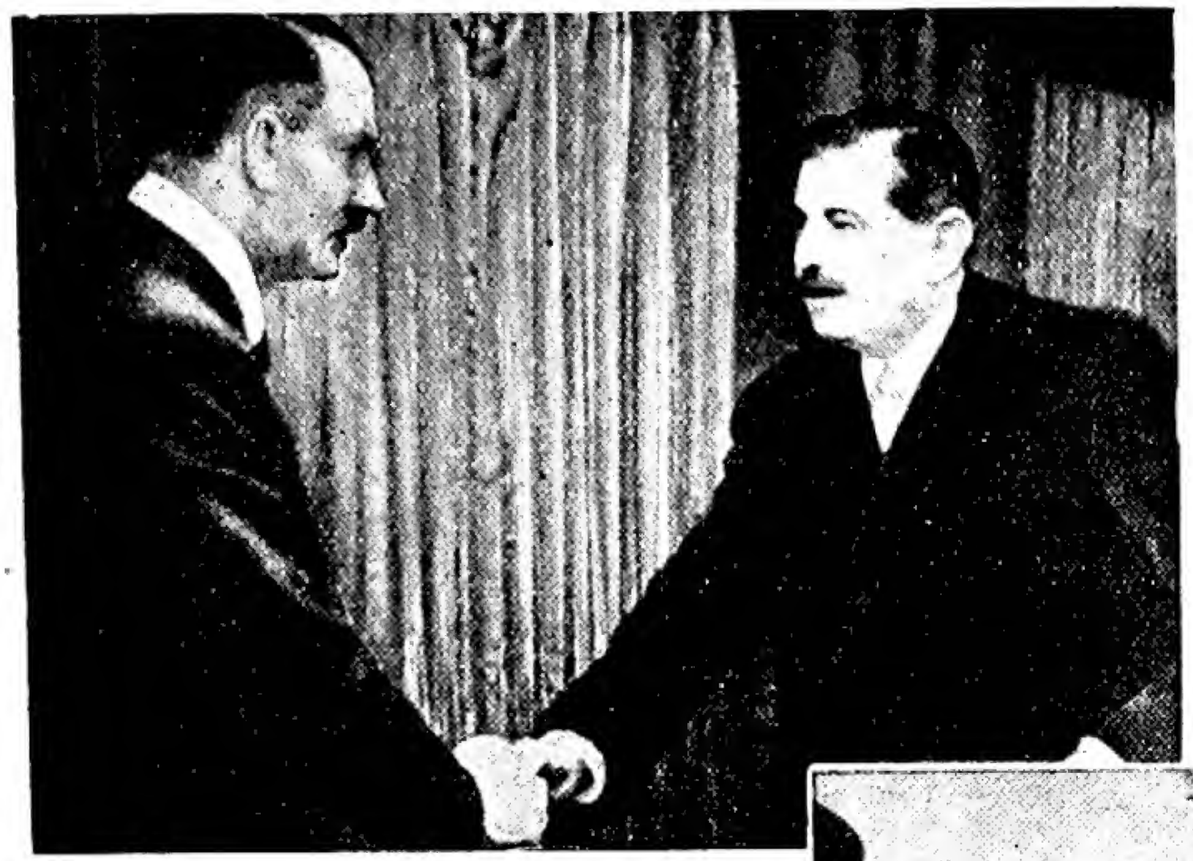




LAST MOMENTS OF THE TORPEDOED 'LAURENTIC'

On November 4, 1940, the Admiralty announced the loss of the armed merchant cruiser 'Laurentic' (Capt. E. P. Vivian, R.N.). She was torpedoed at night by a German submarine, 52 officers and 316 ratings being saved. One of these survivors, Midshipman J. Worsley, R.N.R., has created on canvas this dramatic impression of the tragic death-plunge of his ship. A notable instance of the artist recording for posterity what the camera cannot, the painting was rightly purchased for the nation in 1941.

Exhibited at the National Gallery, London, 1941. *Crown Copyright*





'COLLABORATION' AND THE 'RECONSTRUCTION OF PEACE'

On October 22, 1940, Pierre Laval (top, right) met Hitler in Paris and is here seen shaking hands with the Fuehrer. Two days later there was an interview between Hitler and Marshal Pétain (lower photograph) in Occupied France ; between them is the interpreter Schmitt and behind Hitler is Ribbentrop. Of the second meeting it was announced that the two principals examined the means of reconstructing peace in Europe. (See text, page 1404.)

Photos, Associated Press

were not being deported were required to Germanize them, and an order was given that henceforth all inscriptions, even on tombstones, must be in German.

On November 14 the Vichy Government issued a protest to the German Armistice Commission against this wholesale expulsion from Alsace-Lorraine, for the hunted population, being given the choice between deportation to Poland and transfer to non-occupied France, naturally chose the latter, and were arriving there at the rate of some five or seven trainloads a day. Berlin coldly replied that the expulsions were "logical" and "merely another step in the precise delineation of national boundaries." In addition to this enormous influx of French families into a region which could barely sustain its own inhabitants, some 10,000 German Jews, driven from the Rhineland and the Palatinate, also arrived in the south of France.

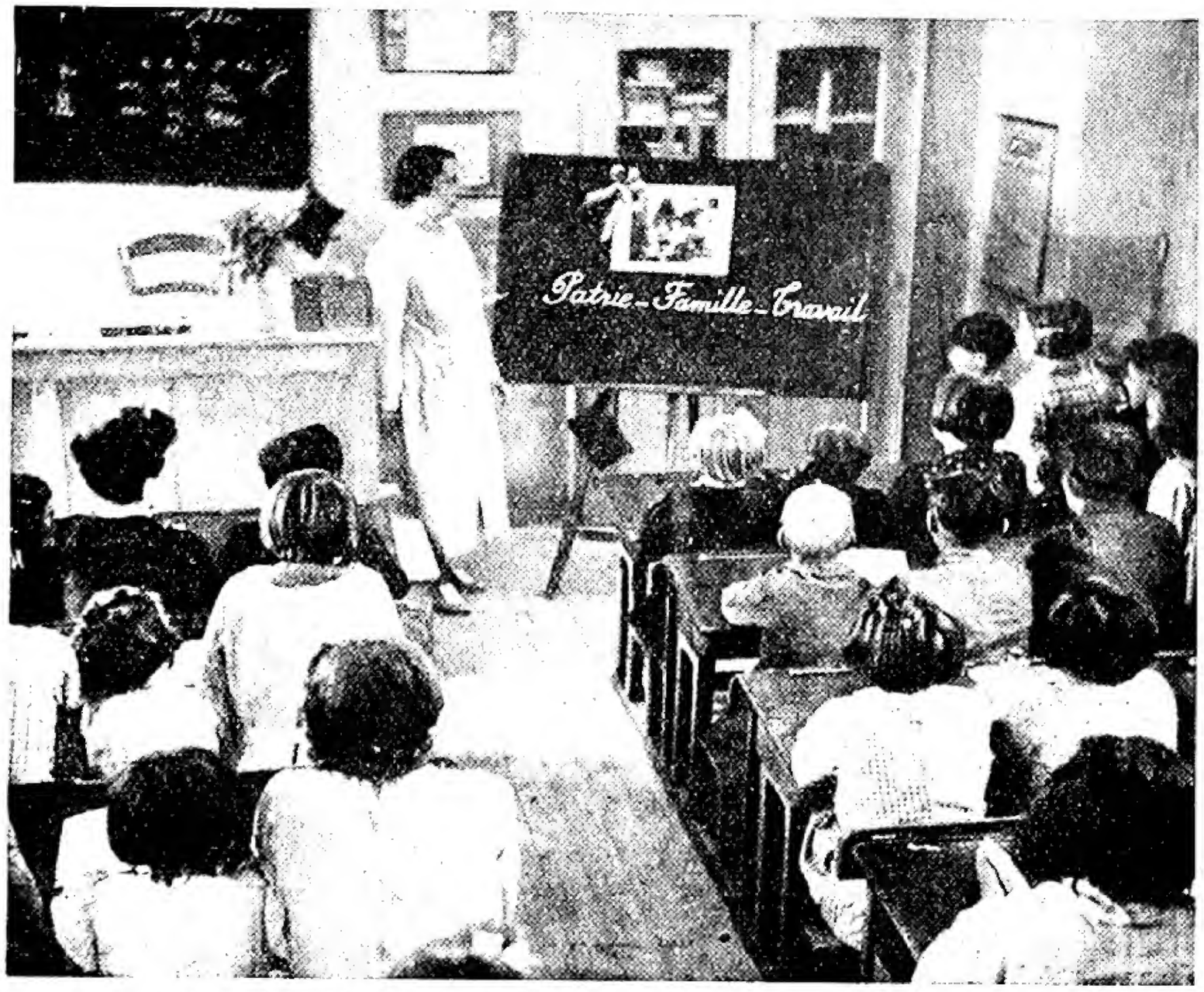
Vichy was fast adopting Hitler's methods in dealing with her own Jewish nationals. By a statute of October 18 all Jews were banned from administrative and governmental posts, from the teaching profession, from the armed services, and from executive positions in enterprises receiving State subsidies, the only exceptions being for Jews who fought in the last war, or were mentioned in dispatches in the present war, or who were recipients of the Légion d'Honneur or the Médaille Militaire. Jews were prohibited from being editors of newspapers, reviews or news agencies (except scientific publications), directors of theatres or film companies, stage managers, cinema producers or scenario writers, and from being connected with the radio. Jewish officials affected were required to cease employment within two months, with the exception of those who had rendered special services to literature, science or art, who might obtain exemption. M. Henri Bergson, the greatest living French philosopher, but a Jew, refused exemption and resigned from his professorial chair at the Collège de France. Five members of the Rothschild family, who fled from France after the Armistice, were denationalized and deprived of their fortunes by the Vichy Government. Other individuals who suffered similarly were the well-known journalists, "Pertinax" (M. André Géraud) and Mme. Geneviève Tabouis.

Anti-Jewish Measures

All Jews and foreigners were prohibited from crossing the boundary between occupied and non-occupied France, and any communication between French people in the two zones was extremely difficult. Transport broke down more and more, and eventually consisted simply of the steady drain of goods into German-occupied territory. On October 6 a restricted form of correspondence was authorized. This consisted of "familiales," stereotyped postcards containing a few printed sentences, which constituted the only method of sending news of one member of the family to another. Later it was announced that not more than 100 letters a day would be allowed to pass into the occupied zone from Vichy France. A complete ban on photography (except by Germans) was imposed in the occupied areas.

"The Germans have divided the country into two zones," wrote Mr. P. J. Philip, former correspondent in Paris of the "New York Times," "and prevented communication between them so that they can increase that sense of impotence among the people which is essential to their plan. They are seeking to break the spirit of the French as they broke the spirit of their own people as a first step towards organizing them into a State machine. The deliberate manner in which these plans are being carried out is evident every day. Instead of organizing, the German authorities obstruct. They have done nothing to improve the lot of the defeated French, and where they claim to have done so they have turned what seemed at first to be a concession into a disadvantage. . . . The whole industry of the country, from the big factories in Paris and its suburbs to the smallest country repair shop, is completely paralysed."

Of Marshal Pétain's supporters some, honest men like himself, believed that France's only hope lay in mental and moral regeneration, as set forth in his own programme. Others, formerly men of wealth and influence, hoped that by upholding the recognized Government, or at least giving it lip service, they might save something for themselves out of



FRENCH CHILDREN LEARN PÉTAIN'S NEW MOTTO

Discarding the historic motto of the French Republic, which in the past had urged on citizens to splendid endeavour, Marshal Pétain in, September, 1940, substituted that of 'Patrie, Famille, Travail'—Fatherland, Family, Work. Here a teacher in a village school is impressing the new motto on her pupils.

Photo, "New York Times"

the wreck. The bulk of the population acquiesced in the Vichy regime, partly because the Marshal still commanded the respect and trust of his people, but also because they were overpowered by a sense of Hitler's invincible might.

Nevertheless, as the year advanced, a changed attitude began to make itself felt. News from outside filtered into the country. More people evaded the frontier guards and slipped into France from Belgium, Holland and elsewhere. Although British broadcasts suffered from jamming, and the penalties for listening-in were very severe, many people contrived to do so, and secretly passed on to others what they learned. Frenchmen who managed to escape from the country told of a new spirit of sympathy towards the British, whose heartening resistance roused a flicker of hope amidst the general disillusionment. In Paris two parties were said to be arising—the Anglophile and the Anglophobe. The former prayed that "les Anglais" would win; the prayer of the latter was that "ces cochons d'Anglais" would win.

When, in October, Hitler made known to Vichy the price of peace, Pétain became immersed in a great struggle with members of his Cabinet who, for their own aggrandizement, were ready to betray their country and virtually hand her over to the enemy. On October 22 the German radio announced that a meeting had taken place that day between Hitler, Ribbentrop and Laval. Rumour was busy, and Vichy found it necessary to issue an emphatic denial that Laval had gone to Paris to negotiate a declaration of war by France against Great Britain. Two days later Hitler and Pétain, attended by Ribbentrop and Laval, had an interview in French-occupied territory, at which—it was announced on October 25—"the two chiefs proceeded to a general examination and in particular to the means of reconstructing peace in Europe. Agreement in principle on collaboration was reached."

The general scope of the German peace terms had leaked out through neutral countries, and it was fairly well established that they included the cession of vast territories at home and abroad: Alsace-Lorraine to Germany; the French Alps, Tunisia and other Mediterranean territories to Italy; a slice of Morocco to Spain (it being assumed that she would join the Axis); and Indo-China to Japan. Then the occupied zone in France would be extended; all French possessions overseas were to be included in a German-Italian mandate "in collaboration with the French"; control of the French Fleet would pass to Germany; and rights would be accorded Germany in French ports and aerodromes.

Small wonder that Pétain and some of his military staff stood out against such dishonourable terms. King George sent a message to the Marshal, encouraging him to resist the German demands and expressing sympathy for the French people, and Mr. Churchill, on October 21, issued a dramatic broadcast—"C'est moi, Churchill"—which, in its English version, appears in page 1394. Furthermore, a warning Note from President Roosevelt was handed to the French Ambassador in Washington to the effect that military collaboration with the Axis Powers might precipitate the occupation of Martinique and French Guiana by the United States.

Churchill's Dramatic Appeal

On October 28 Laval became Foreign Minister in the place of Baudouin, the last of the War Cabinet Ministers. After an emergency meeting at Vichy Laval departed on another pilgrimage to Paris, where he was later joined by General Huntziger, Minister of War, in conferences with the Nazi leaders.



'WE'LL BEAT THEM YET'

Not all Frenchmen lost heart during the months following the French collapse, and there were many subtle ways in which stalwarts managed to show their determination. A label 'On les aura' was sometimes affixed to a bottle, as shown here.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

Meanwhile, the French newspapers were urging people to have confidence in Marshal Pétain "for the future of Europe." Laval's newspaper, "Le Moniteur," asserted that France's only hope was to cooperate with Germany.

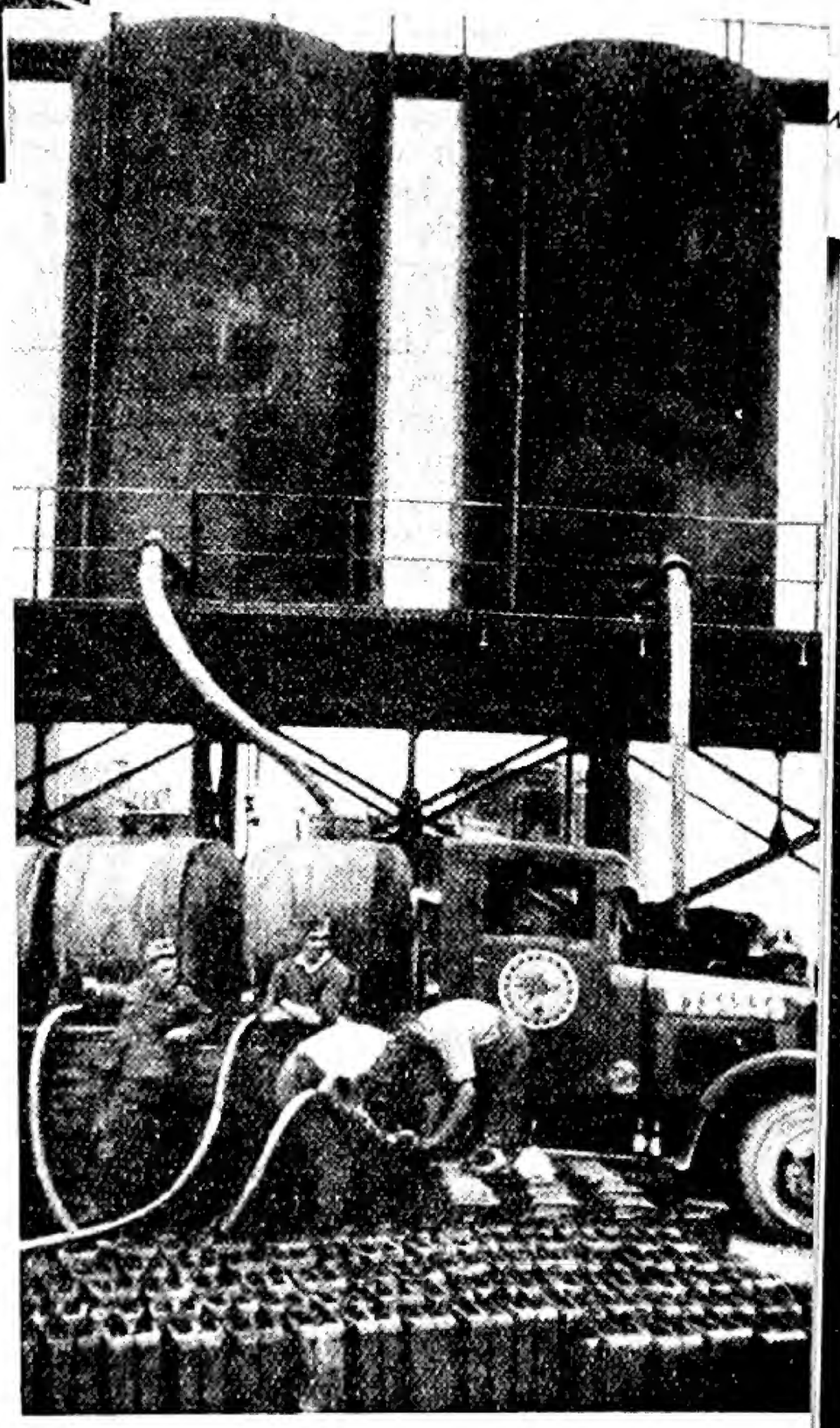


HUMILIATED FRANCE UNDER NAZI RULE

The Maginot forts proved of great interest to the Germans, some of whom are seen (left) in one of the tunnels ; at the foot of the page Frenchmen are removing barbed wire entanglements from the fortress region. Centre, left, the Nazi traffic control on the border between Occupied and Unoccupied France ; right, drawing off oil at a French depot, for dispatch to Germany.

Photos, "New York Times" ; E.N.A.





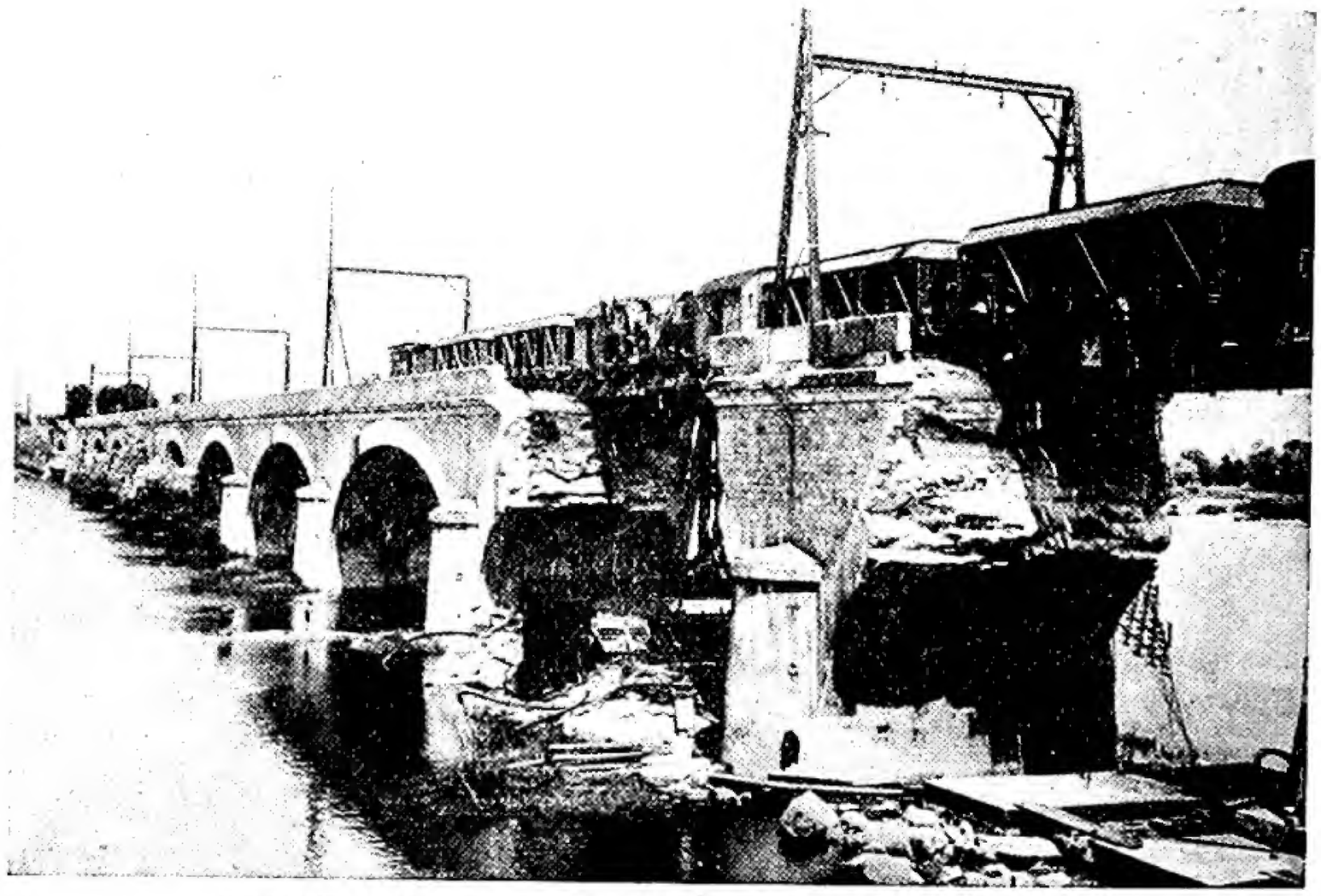


"All other ways, advocated by agitators, blind men or traitors, lead only to a dramatic dead end."

Laval, now openly anti-British and as ambitious as he was unscrupulous, was doing everything he could to hasten a settlement with Germany, and was said to have at any rate the partial support of Darlan. It was thought that Pétain, in his conversations with Hitler, had succeeded in having the original demands modified. Nevertheless, he hesitated, and it was not until October 30 that he broadcast again to the French people (*see* page 1394), and, in what amounted to an apology for accepting the principle of Hitler's "New Order," hinted at the conditions which had been used as levers to bring about his acquiescence. "In the near future the load of suffering of our country may be lightened, the lot of our prisoners improved, the burden of occupation expenses lessened, the line of demarcation may be rendered more flexible, and the administration and provisioning of the territory facilitated."

Laval and Darlan

The problem of the 1,800,000 French prisoners was, indeed, one of the most tormenting he had to face. A great number of these unfortunates had been transported to the Reich. All were forced to work for Germany, with barely enough food to keep body and soul together. Hitler, it was suggested, had deliberately resolved on the reduction of the French population—and hence of France herself—to an incontestably subordinate place in the European family, by holding indefinitely a large proportion of the younger men, and this abominable intention might well have been used to blackmail Pétain into considering terms against which he might otherwise have set his face. But on two points he would seem to have refused to give way, namely, declaring war now or at any time on Great Britain, and the handing over to the Germans of the French Fleet.



BROKEN BRIDGES FAILED TO HALT THE ENEMY

The Montlouis bridge over the Loire near Tours was temporarily repaired by the Germans, who built timber structures over the broken spans; here French workmen are rebuilding the masonry. The destruction seems to have been half-hearted, for most of the spans are intact.

Photo, Planet News



BACK TO COMPARATIVE FREEDOM

The enormous number of French prisoners in German hands gave the Nazis a lever in bargaining with Vichy, and only a few of the unhappy captives were freed, despite Pétain's concessions. Here some of the wounded prisoners first released are seen arriving in Vichy (October, 1940) from the occupied region.

Photo, Planet News

On November 4 M. Fernand de Brinon, an intimate friend of Laval, was appointed representative of the Vichy Government to the German authorities in Paris, with the title of "French Ambassador." Laval, still hurrying to and fro between the obdurate old Marshal at Vichy and the Nazi chiefs, including Goering, in Paris, took de Brinon with him on November 22 for new conversations. Two days later Laval warned the French press that greater efforts must be made towards collaboration with Germany, and announced that eleven newspapers had been suspended for from one to three days for publishing details of British raids on Le Havre.

But relations continued to be tense between Vichy and Paris, and also, within the French Cabinet, between Pétain and Laval with his satellite Darlan, until on December 14 the Marshal broadcast the startling announcement that he had dismissed Laval from his Cabinet, replacing him as Foreign Minister by M. Flandin, and that the Constitutional Act which nominated Laval as his own successor was cancelled. "It is for high reasons of internal policy that I have taken this decision," he said. Immediately afterwards an announcer declared that Marshal Pétain had informed Hitler of the change in a message in which he said that M. Flandin seemed to him better able to pursue a policy of rapprochement between Germany and France with the support of public opinion.

According to dispatches from Berne, Laval had planned to overthrow the Vichy Government, which was showing itself unexpectedly critical of the German demands. But, part of his plot for a coup d'état was accidentally revealed at a Cabinet meeting on December 13. There was a heated scene, during which Laval threatened violence to the aged Marshal, was arrested by the guards, and carried off to share temporarily the imprisonment of Daladier, Gamelin and Reynaud.

Whether these details of the dramatic eclipse of Laval are true or not, the rupture took place and Pétain became once again the real leader of the Government in its struggle for the soul—and body—of France.

Chapter 134

MERCHANT SHIPPING AT THE END OF 1940 MAINTAINING VITAL ATLANTIC SUPPLIES

Casualties in the First Six Months—Shipping Tonnage Declines: How the Situation Was Met—America's Shipbuilding Drive—The Convoy Escort Problem—Ships for Britain from the U.S. Laid-up Fleet—Tramp Shipping From Greece—Supplying the Middle East Forces—Loss of the 'Empress of Britain'—Polish Ships Escape from Dakar—First American Ship Sunk—'Laurentic' and 'Patroclus' Torpedoed—Tragedy of the 'Western Prince'

It is no exaggeration to say that, but for the courage, endurance and sacrifice of her seamen, the war effort of Britain might well have been paralysed before the end of 1940 by want of food for the population and raw materials for industry. With the intensification of the air raids in the autumn of 1940 popular concern was directed less to the work of the seamen, and it was fitting, therefore, that in October the Ministry of Shipping should correct a curious anomaly of official procedure by publishing for the first time casualty lists of officers and men of the Merchant Navy. Unlike soldiers, airmen and civilians, these men (including Indians and Chinese and the nationals of other friendly countries) had continuously from the first day of war been facing the barbarous fury of the Nazis—manifested in torpedoes fired without warning, mines sown indiscriminately, shells from the lurking raider, and other like perils. The first casualty list was a reminder of the nation's debt.

Issued on October 16, the list covered roughly the first six months of the war and contained the names of 917 members of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets; it was made up of 45 masters and skippers, 192 deck and engine room officers, 19. radio officers and 661 men. The First Lord of the Admiralty later announced that in the first year of the war the figures for crews and passengers lost and saved were approximately: 3,327 lost, 15,635 saved, and 1,100 taken prisoner or interned.

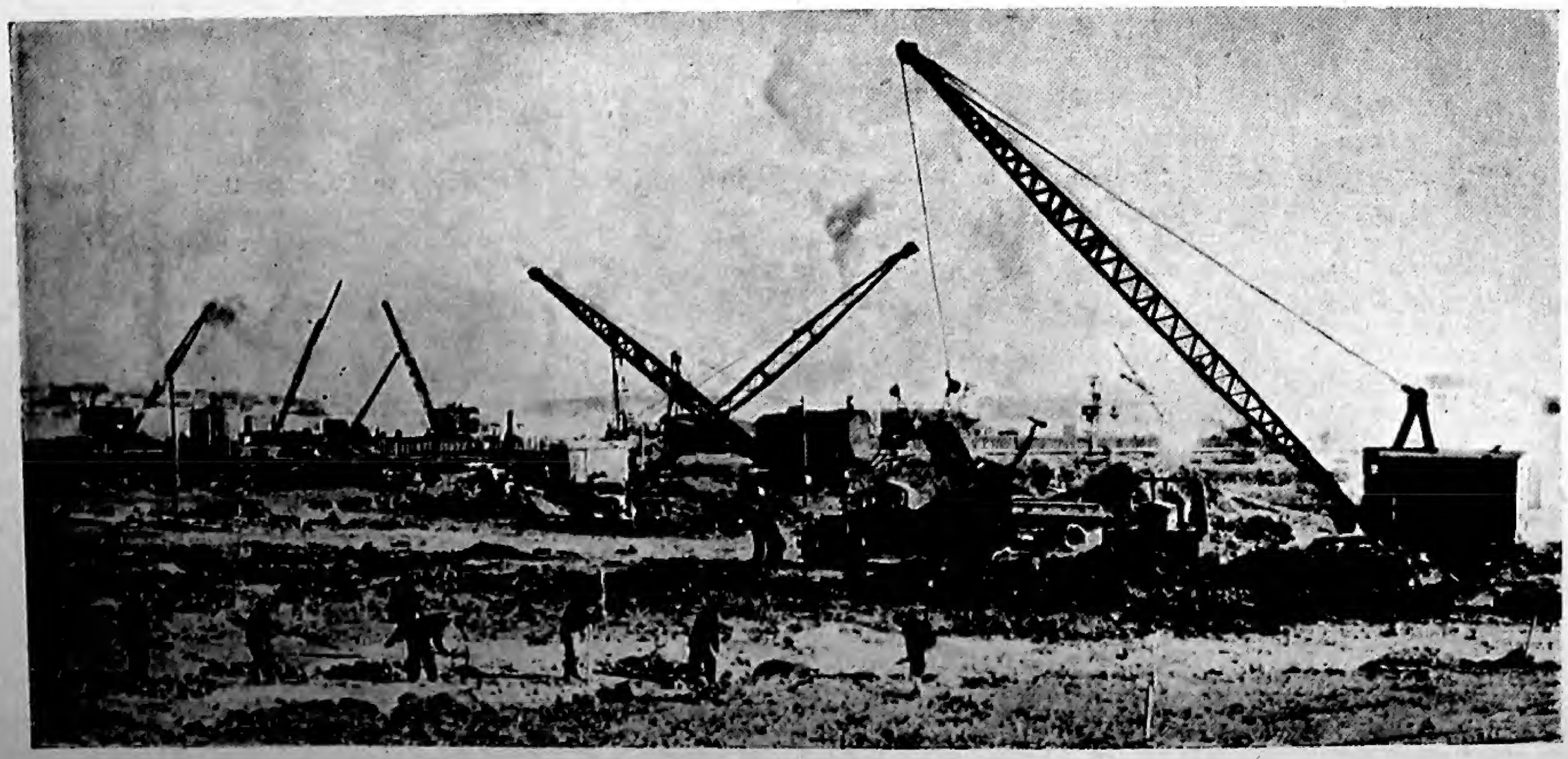
It is pointed out in Chapter 117 (page 1228) how in the autumn of 1940 the prospects of the shipping situation were regarded as disturbing, owing to the continued high rate of loss and the consequent gap between the destruction and production of tonnage. The September losses of British, Allied and neutral tonnage had reached the highest total of the war with the exception of June, 1940, when many of the vessels sunk had been engaged in naval operations during the evacuation of the B.E.F. from France.

In the following three months there was a progressive decline, the December total actually being 100,000 tons less than that forOctober. The average, however, for these three months still represented an annual loss of 4,500,000 tons gross against an annual launching capacity of British shipyards (at that time) of under 1,000,000 tons. In the six-month period June to November the losses corresponded to an annual rate of over 5,000,000 tons—nearly six times the tonnage launched annually during the five pre-war years by Great Britain, the British Empire and the United States together. It was obvious that such a situation could not continue for long without the most serious repercussions on Britain's production and fighting capacity.

Fortunately the British Government had awakened to the seriousness of the situation. Judging by the pronouncements of Ministers and Government

WHERE AMERICA BUILT SHIPS FOR BRITAIN

As part of the U.S.A. programme of shipbuilding for the Allies a shipyard was constructed at South Portland, Maine, on a novel principle: the ships were to be built in basins below sea level, and to be 'launched' by letting in water from the seaward end Below, excavating for the basins in March, 1941. *Photo, Associated Press*





LAID-UP MERCHANT SHIPS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE ALLIES

After the close of the First Great War hundreds of ships owned by the United States Maritime Commission were laid up in various American harbours, where most of them remained until mid-1940. These ships were then made available for sale to or charter by Britain and her Allies. Above, some of the 'forgotten fleet.'

Photo, Topical Press

officials there had undoubtedly existed an insufficient appreciation of the fact that the keystone of the fighting power of an island such as Britain must be its Merchant Navy.

As is usually the case in a sudden awakening to a developing situation, there was a tendency at first to distort the perspective. Thus Mr. Arthur Greenwood declared in the House of Commons that the shipping position was "much like that of April, 1917." In reality, not only was the actual tonnage sunk less than that of the worst period of 1917 by about 40 per cent, but the shipping position in terms of importing capacity was in no way comparable. Whereas in the spring of 1917 a marked shortage of ships had produced a serious crisis, there was no real shortage in the autumn and winter of 1940. Indeed, the net British losses, after taking account of new building, captures and purchases, amounted to only about 3 per cent of the British tonnage owned at the outbreak of the war, excluding the huge shipping resources of our Allies. There were other points of difference. In the former war the building of merchant ships had been grossly neglected until a crisis was reached; no such error of policy was committed in 1939 and 1940. In 1917 the solution was found in the adoption of the convoy system; in the Second Great War the convoy system had been brought into operation immediately on the outbreak of hostilities, but for one reason or another had been proved insufficient. The problem in 1940 was not that a shortage of ships existed but that means had to be found to prevent a potential shortage.

British Shipping Position

In the absence of some new development of strategy two main courses had to be followed in combination: the creation of a vastly increased shipbuilding replacement capacity and the strengthening of protective naval and aerial escorts. A subsidiary but important move was the offensive carried out by the R.A.F. against U-boat bases on the French coast. As proof of the urgency of the situation the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, declared in Parliament in December, 1940, that the Government must regard the keeping open of the Atlantic Channel to the world as "the *first* of the military tasks which lie before us at the present time."

One—perhaps the main—reason for Britain's inability to stem the attacks of enemy submarines and long-range bombers (apart from the strategical and geographical disadvantages outlined in Chapter 102) was brought home in a striking manner early in November. The unforgettable epic of the "Jervis Bay" (described in Chapter 125) did more than demonstrate the spirit of

British, Allied and Neutral Merchant Shipping Losses

	Sept. 3, 1939–Sept. 30, 1940	*October, 1940*	*November, 1940*	*December, 1940*	TOTAL *1940*
	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross
BRITISH					
Mercantile voyages	1,808,363	299,399	303,627	242,726	1,384,058
Naval operations ..	167,325	—	—	—	167,325
Naval auxiliaries ..	151,033	—	44,202	16,400	194,938
Naval trawlers ..	17,709	3,751	3,193	767	22,979
Total British ..	2,144,430	303,150	351,022	259,893	1,769,300
ALLIED	591,552	71,964	53,922	69,668	710,201
Total	2,735,982	375,114	404,944	329,561	2,479,501
NEUTRAL	836,139	52,253	15,068	13,222	676,278
Grand Total	3,572,121	427,367	420,012	342,783	3,155,779

the men who sailed under the White and Red Ensigns and the flags of Allied powers and friendly neutrals. It revealed the extent to which convoy escorts had had to be depleted owing to the multifarious duties which the Royal Navy (the largest navy in the world, be it remembered) was called upon to perform. That a convoy of no fewer than 38 ships, homeward bound with essential cargoes, was given the protection of only one naval escort —and that a converted passenger liner of moderate speed and relatively poor striking power—clearly indicated at least one of the reasons for the high shipping losses.

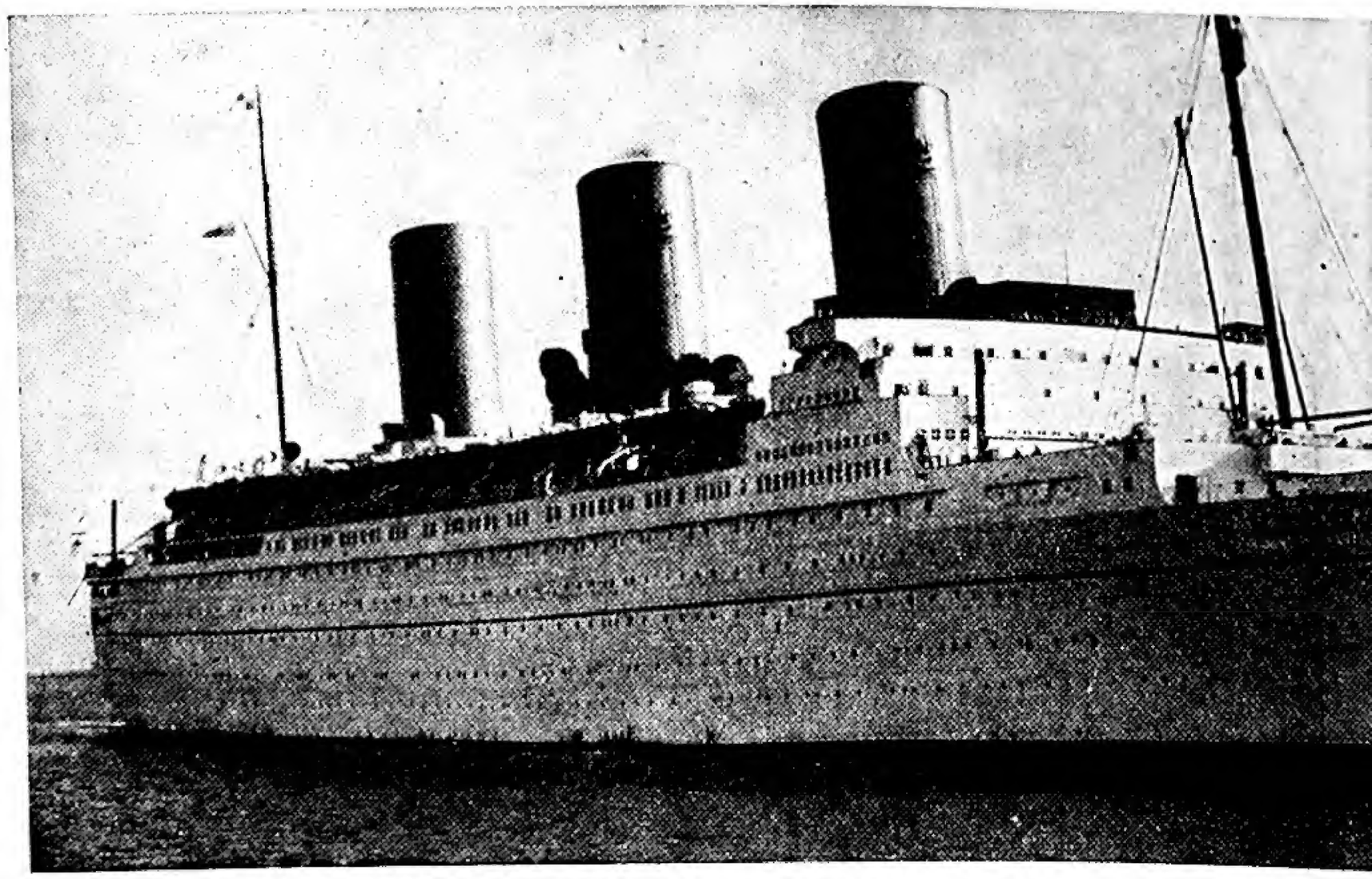
It is true that the convoy had not reached the waters frequented by U-boats and threatened by long-range bombers when it was attacked by a powerful German surface vessel, of the pocket battleship class or larger. But it was not outside the range of German submarines, and the possible presence of a powerful raider was a factor against which provision had to be made on all the seas. Together the ships of the "Jervis Bay" convoy, which included many valuable units such as the passenger and cargo liner "Rangitiki" and the new tankers "James J. Maguire" and "Solfom," must have been carrying something like 120,000 tons of oil and 200,000 tons of mixed cargoes of foodstuffs and war materials. Had not the volume of Naval protection available for convoy duties been strictly limited by the demands elsewhere (in the Mediterranean, the English Channel, and so on), such a valuable convoy would have been strongly protected, even in mid-Atlantic.

'Jervis Bay' Convoy

Following the crippling of the Italian battle fleet at Taranto on the night of November 11–12 (*see* Chapter 125), further Naval vessels were probably released from Mediterranean duties for convoy work in the Atlantic. This, combined with the steady strengthening of the aerial escorts of the Coastal Command, was partly responsible for the decline in Allied losses during December, to which attention has already been drawn. Another factor was undoubtedly the adverse weather, which hampered particularly the activities of the German long-range bombers based on aerodromes along the French and Norwegian coasts.

While Naval escort strength was increased the first moves were made along the second course of the solution to the blockade menace. In November, 1940, it was reported that the British Purchasing Commission in America had surveyed sites for the creation of two large shipyards to build cargo vessels for Britain, the yards and the ships to be financed by Britain. In December it was announced that orders had been placed for 60 standardized ships of about 10,000 tons deadweight, 30 each at two new shipyards associated with the Todd Shipbuilding Corporation of America. One yard was at Richmond, California, and the other at South Portland, Maine, on the Atlantic seaboard. Excavation work began at once, seven building berths being laid out at each yard; those at South Portland were unusual in that they were not slipways from which ships were slid into the water in the usual manner, but basins constructed below the water level, the "launching" procedure being to open dock gates at the seaward end.

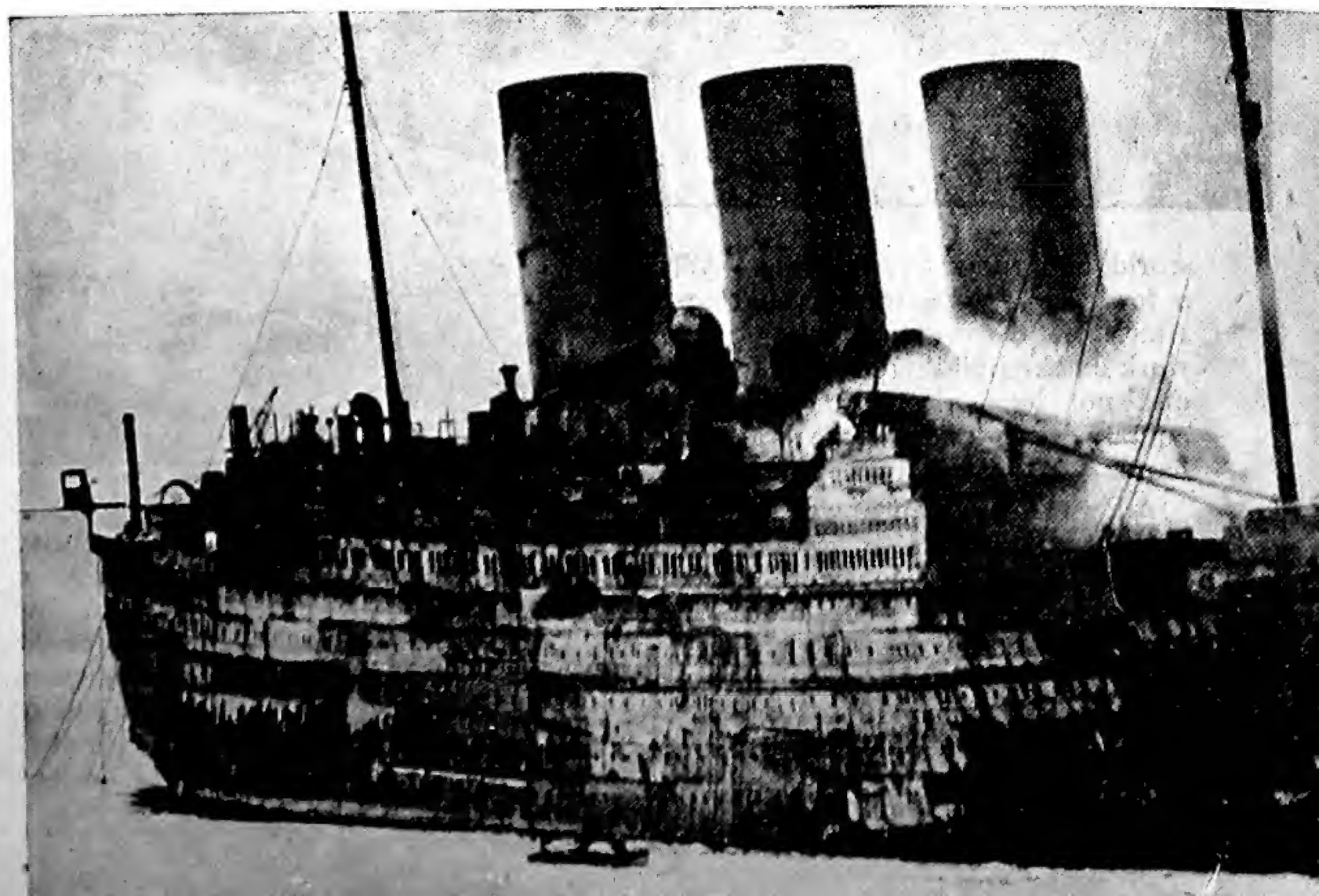
Sixty ships (involving a total of about 330,000 tons gross), nearly all of which could not be in service until 1942, was not a great programme. But it was the first step in the creation of an emergency shipbuilding drive such as the

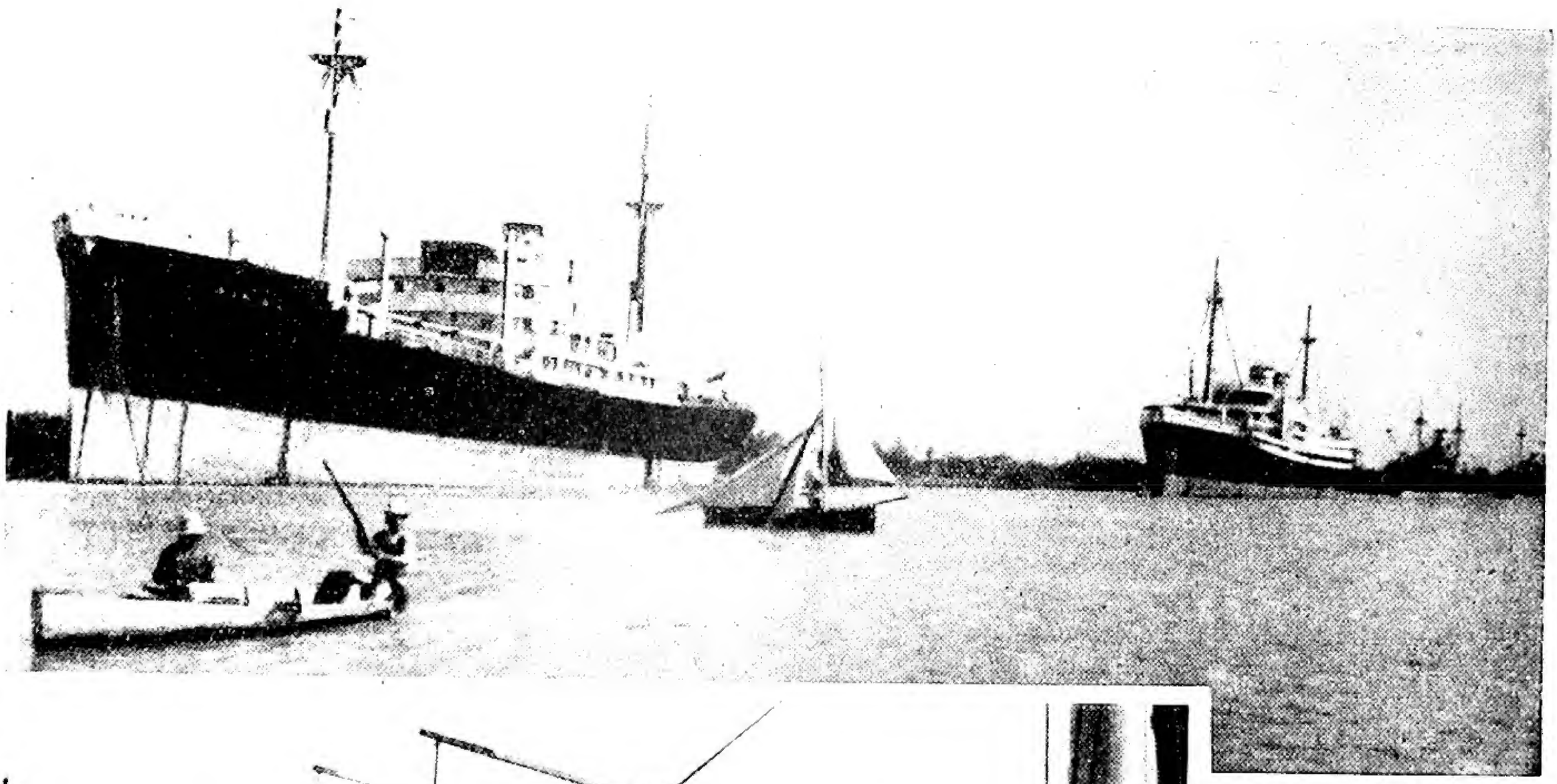


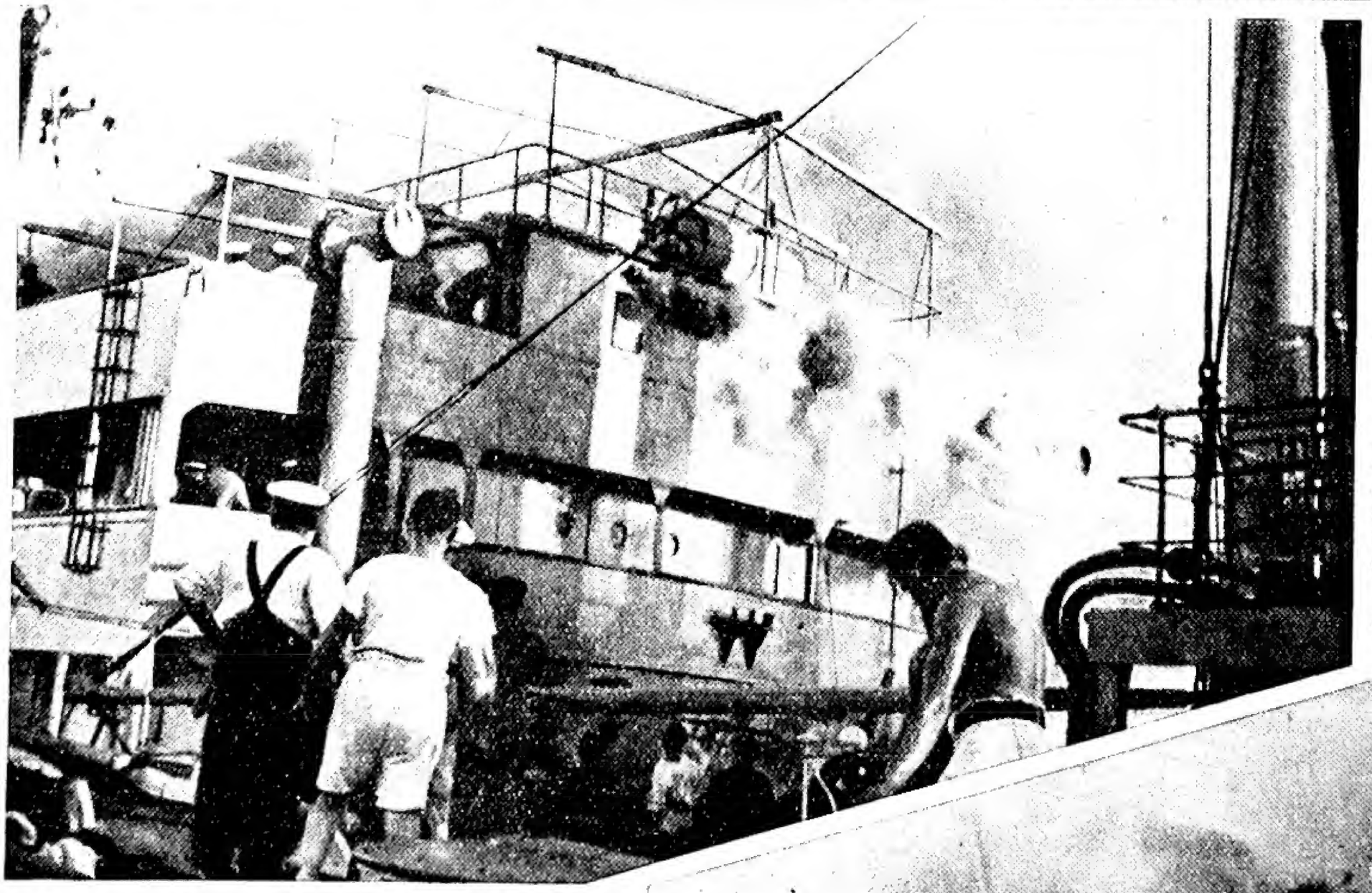
FAMOUS LUXURY LINER IN PEACE AND WAR

On the morning of October 25, 1940, German aircraft made a determined attack on the 'Empress of Britain' (42,348 tons), flagship of the Canadian Pacific Fleet, seen above in her heyday. Savagely assaulted with high explosive and incendiary bombs, the great vessel rapidly took fire (lower photograph) and had to be abandoned. Later, while under tow, she was torpedoed and sank. High tribute was paid to Capt. C. H. Sapsworth, who stayed on the bridge until it burned beneath him. (See also p. 1439.)

Photos, P. A. Vicary; Keystone









THEY TRIED TO RUN THE BLOCKADE

Towards the end of 1940 four German supply ships—'Phrygia,' 'Orinoco,' 'Rhein' and 'Idarwald'—in the harbour at Tampico, Mexico (left to right, above), tried to escape to sea. The 'Phrygia' was set on fire and scuttled by her crew, while the 'Idarwald' was intercepted off Cuba by H.M.S. 'Diomede.' She also was scuttled (left) and, despite the British cruiser's efforts to save her, eventually sank. A similar end overtook the 'Rhein' (below), set on fire when pursued by a Dutch destroyer.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Associated Press

world had never seen before. Within a few weeks news was given that the American Government was to start work on the building of 200 cargo ships, and not long afterwards a new and equally large programme was put in hand.

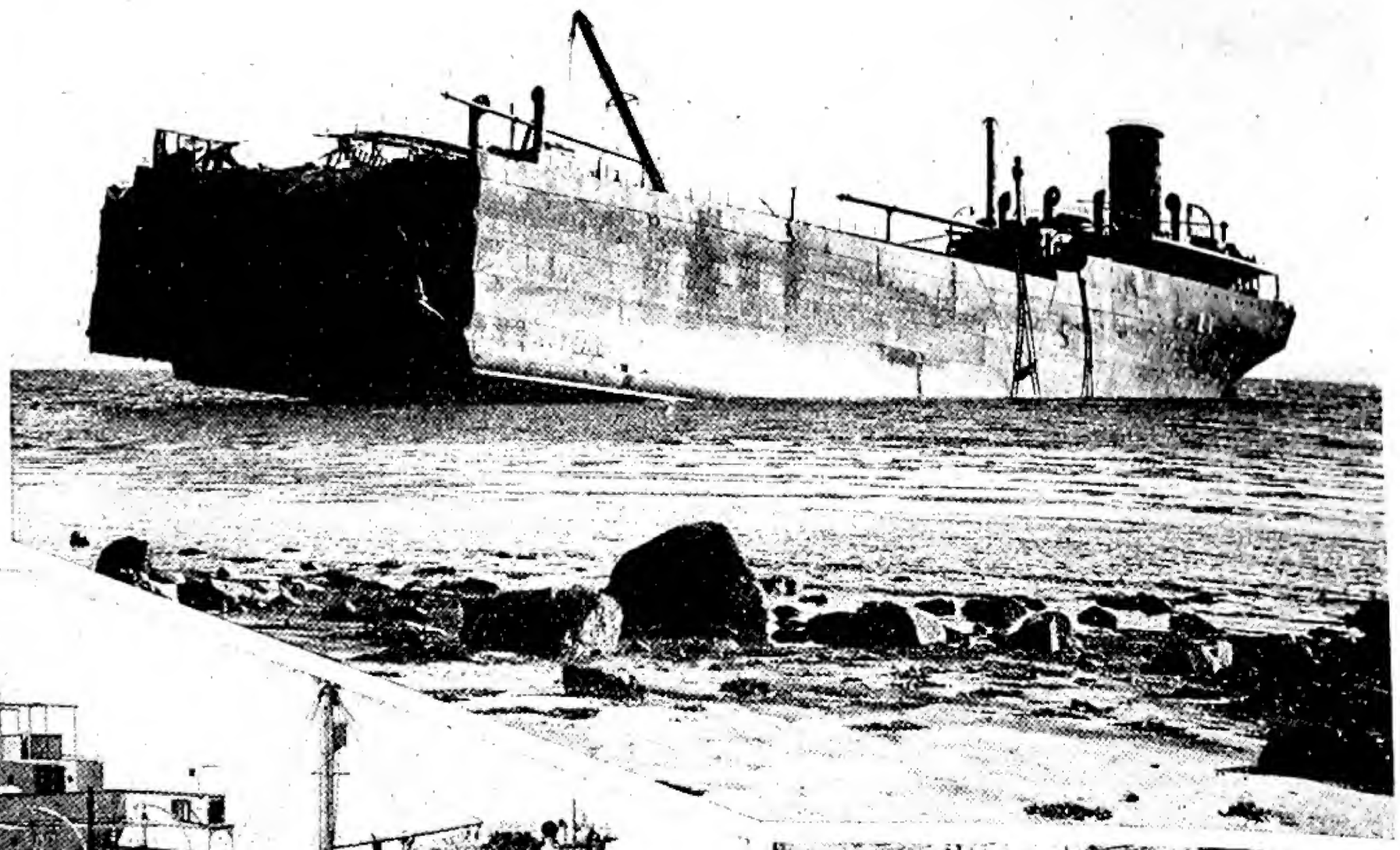
American assistance was also forthcoming by the sale to Britain towards the end of 1940 of a considerable volume of old shipping. Much of this came from the U.S. Government laid-up fleet, consisting mainly of vessels built during and after the war of 1914–18 as part of the war effort. In September, 1939, there were 113 ships in this fleet, and by the end of 1940 practically the whole had been placed in service, a majority of the ships being bought by Britain.

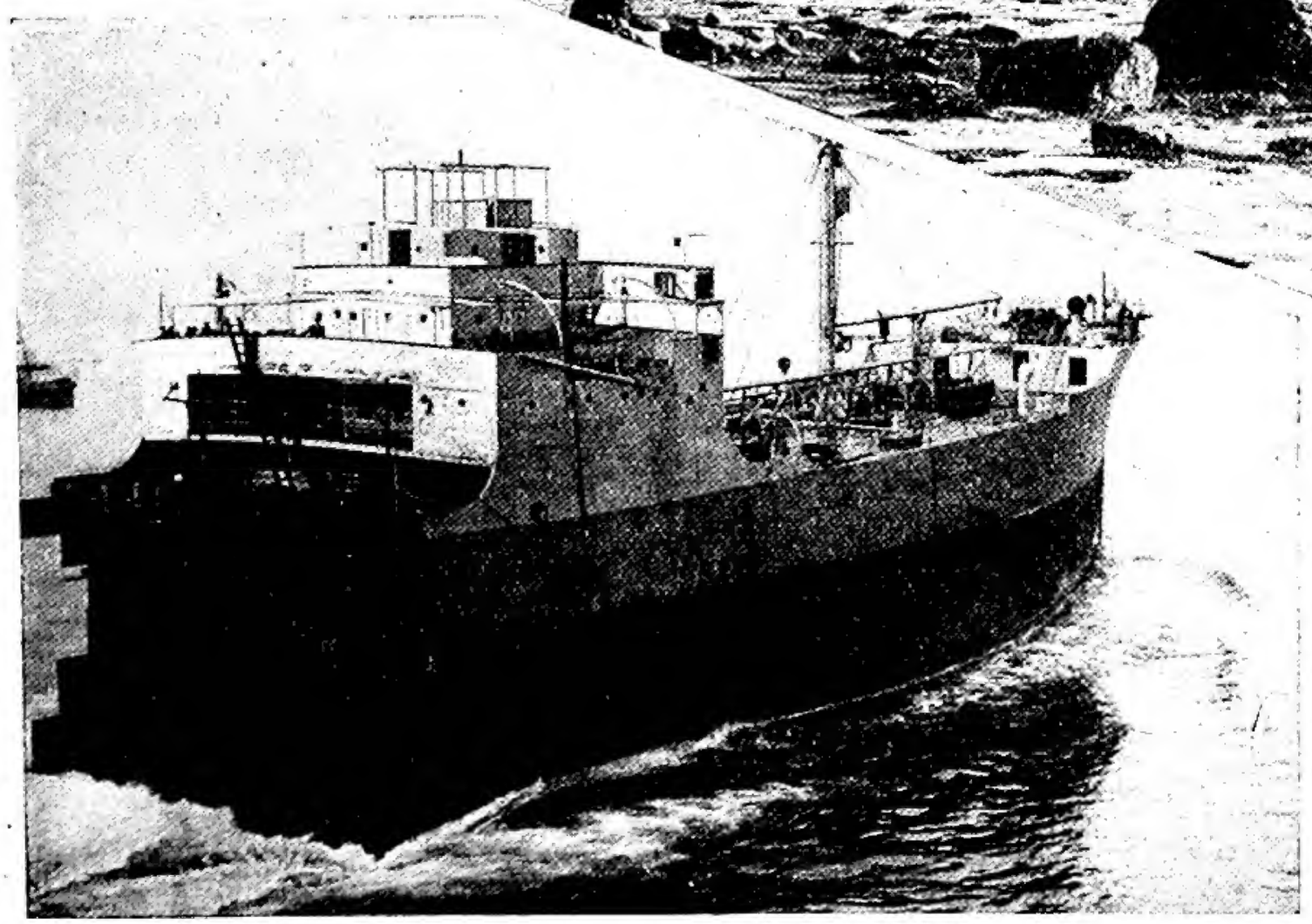
An important development in the Allied shipping position was brought about by Italy's plunderous and abortive attack on Greece at the end of October, 1940. With the exception of Japan all the great seafaring nations of the world were now ranged side by side against the exponents of international gangsterdom. The tramp shipping of Greece ranked in importance second only to that of Great Britain. It consisted of more than 350 ships of sea-going size, with a gross tonnage in excess of 1,600,000. Many were already chartered to the British

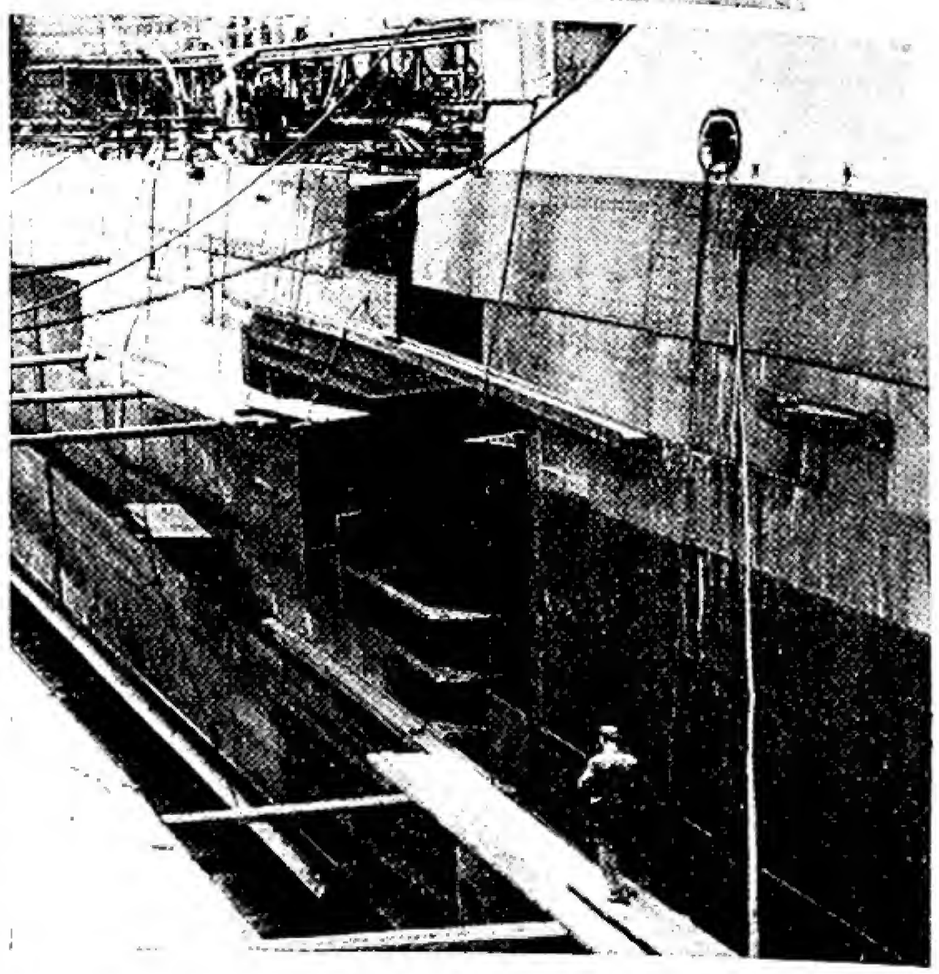
TRIUMPH OF SHIP REPAIRING

In February, 1940, the 'Imperial Transport' broke in two when torpedoed in the Atlantic, but (right) Capt. W. Smail skilfully brought the stern half back to a British port with the aid of a school atlas. Scottish shipwrights built a new bow portion which was successfully launched (below left). Old stern and new bows were then united (below right) and the 'Imperial Transport' set out to join her comrades fighting the Battle of the Atlantic. (See also illustration, p. 645.)

Photos, J. Hall, Gourock







Ministry of Shipping, but the gain to Allied shipping was nevertheless considerable. The total Allied tonnage—Norwegian, Dutch, Greek, Free French, Belgian and Polish—which had joined the struggle against the Dictators now amounted to about 8,750,000, excluding losses sustained since entering Allied service. This was more than three times the British tonnage sunk up to the end of 1940.

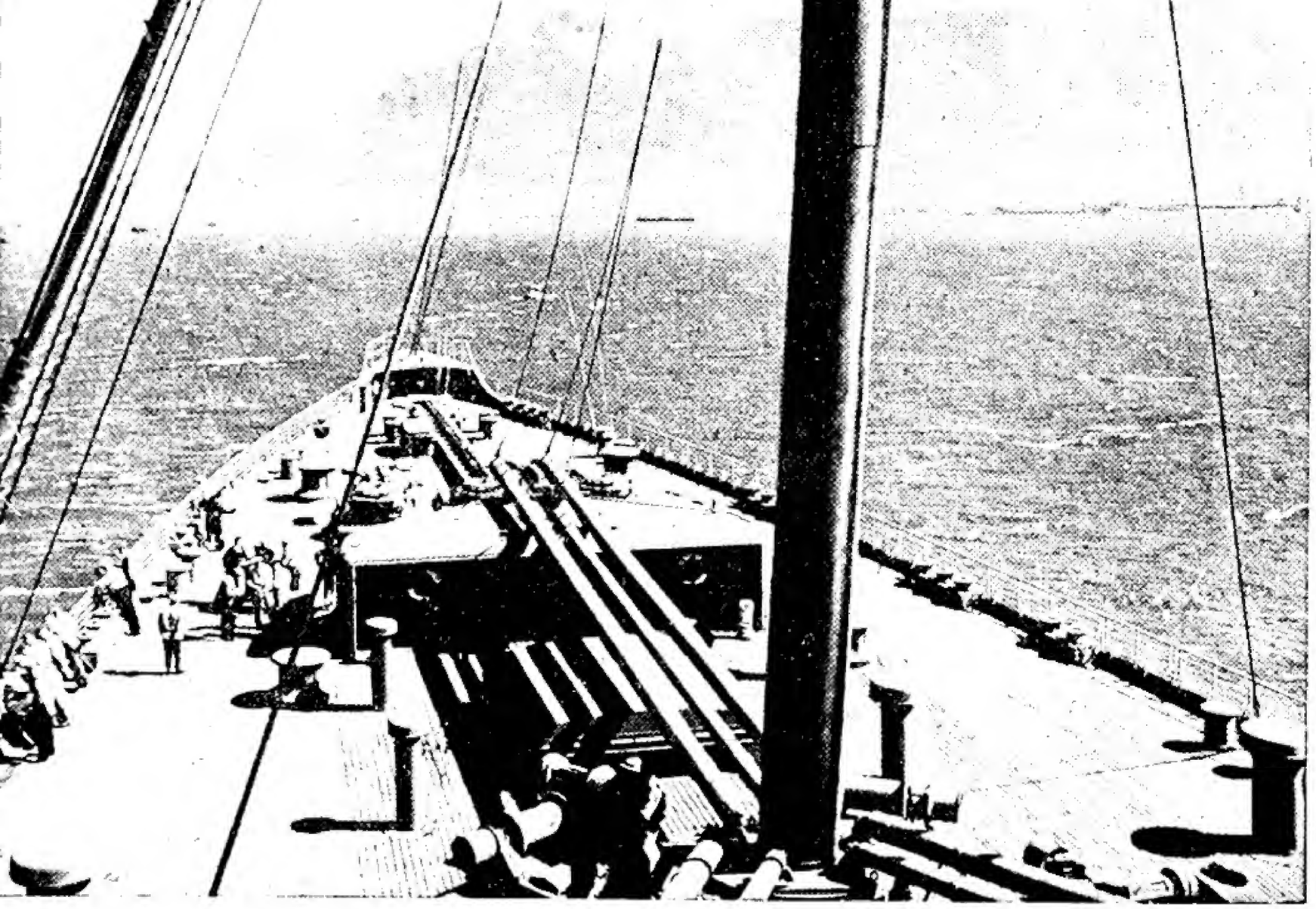
One of the first moves of the Greek Government when hostilities began was to order all homeward bound Greek ships to make for British ports. A committee was set up in London and vested with powers of control (including requisition) over all Greek ships of 4,000 tons deadweight and over, and all ships of less than that tonnage outside the Eastern Mediterranean. The committee acted in close cooperation with the British Ministry of Shipping.

Another factor in the shipping position at this period was the substantial demand on capacity, as well as on naval escorts, brought about by the necessity for reinforcing the British forces in Egypt and provisioning those forces by both the Mediterranean and the long Cape route. Though little had been said at the time, Mr. Churchill revealed in a speech on November 5, 1940, that during the previous months the desert armies had been reinforced "almost to the limits of our shipping capacity." "Scores of thousands of troops," he added, "have left this island month after month, or have been drawn from other parts of the Empire, for the Middle East." As usual in the case of large-scale troop and munition movements carried out by Britain, no important losses occurred.

The success of these movements was reflected in December in a reduction of the war risk insurance rates on cargoes for the Eastern Mediterranean. Voyages from the United Kingdom to Port Said, Suez, etc., were rated at £6 per cent, against £7 10s. previously, while other rates were reduced from £10 to £7 10s. per cent.

Special types of ship were required to supply the Middle East forces. In order to release such vessels for military purposes a ban was imposed on banana imports towards the end of November. The ships were needed, it was officially stated, "for war work." Most of the fruit ships involved were fast vessels, many with a speed of 18 knots or more.

One of the tragedies of the war on merchant shipping occurred in October—the loss of one of the finest and most beautiful passenger liners flying the British flag. The "Empress of Britain," flagship of the Canadian Pacific fleet, was sunk during the night of October 27/28. The liner had been attacked by a German bomber in the



'QUEEN ELIZABETH' AT CAPE TOWN

The 'Queen Elizabeth' crossed to New York in February, 1940, to lie there in company with others of her class (see illus., p. 708). From time to time came news of the activities of these mammoth ships, and in p. 732 the 'Mauretania' is seen in the Panama Canal, having left New York with the 'Queen Mary' in the spring. In December the 'Queen Elizabeth' arrived unescorted at Cape Town, where this view looking down her fore deck was taken.

Photo, Fox

early morning two days previously, about 150 miles from the Irish coast, inward bound with 643 people on board, including officers and crew, military families and a small number of military personnel. Several bombs, high explosives and incendiaries, struck the ship and set her ablaze. The bomber machine-gunned the bridge, but was answered by steady fire from the liner's A.A. defences, which, in the words of the official communiqué, "contributed largely to the high proportion of the total complement being saved." There were 598 survivors. In spite of the flames there was no panic. The last of the sailors left the ship about six hours after the attack, and the flames were still spreading. The commander, Capt. Charles Howard Sapworth, was an inspiration of cool courage. He remained at his post while the bridge practically burned beneath his feet. Salvage operations had been begun immediately after the attack, but while still in tow the liner was torpedoed by a German submarine. Some days later it was revealed that the same submarine had been sunk.

Like all the fleet of Canadian Pacific Steamships, Ltd., the "Empress of Britain" was registered in Great Britain. Of 42,348 tons gross, she was launched on the Clyde in June, 1930. One of the fastest and most luxurious ships in Empire service, she was the most notable merchant ship to have been sunk during the war. Another regrettable loss was that of the Royal Mail liner "Highland Patriot," of 14,174 tons gross. She was torpedoed without warning when homeward bound from South America. Fortunately only three of the crew of 139 lost their lives, being killed by the explosion, and all the 33 passengers were rescued.

A typical incident demonstrating the resourcefulness and daring of Allied merchant seamen was the escape from Dakar during October, 1940, of two Polish coastal ships: the "Rozewie" (1,000 tons) and the "Kroman" (1,864 tons). It had become clear that the French authorities were planning to seize six Polish ships which were berthed at Dakar at the time of the French collapse. Steel cables with electric alarms were placed at the mouth of the harbour. The masters decided to make a dash for safety, in spite of powerful French artillery units which were constantly on the look-out. The "Rozewie" slipped under the nose of a French battleship at dead of night, started the alarm, broke the cable and managed to reach open sea. The "Kroman" got away later, without navigation papers and lacking certain parts of her machinery, as it had been learned that German agents were going to pay an uninvited visit.

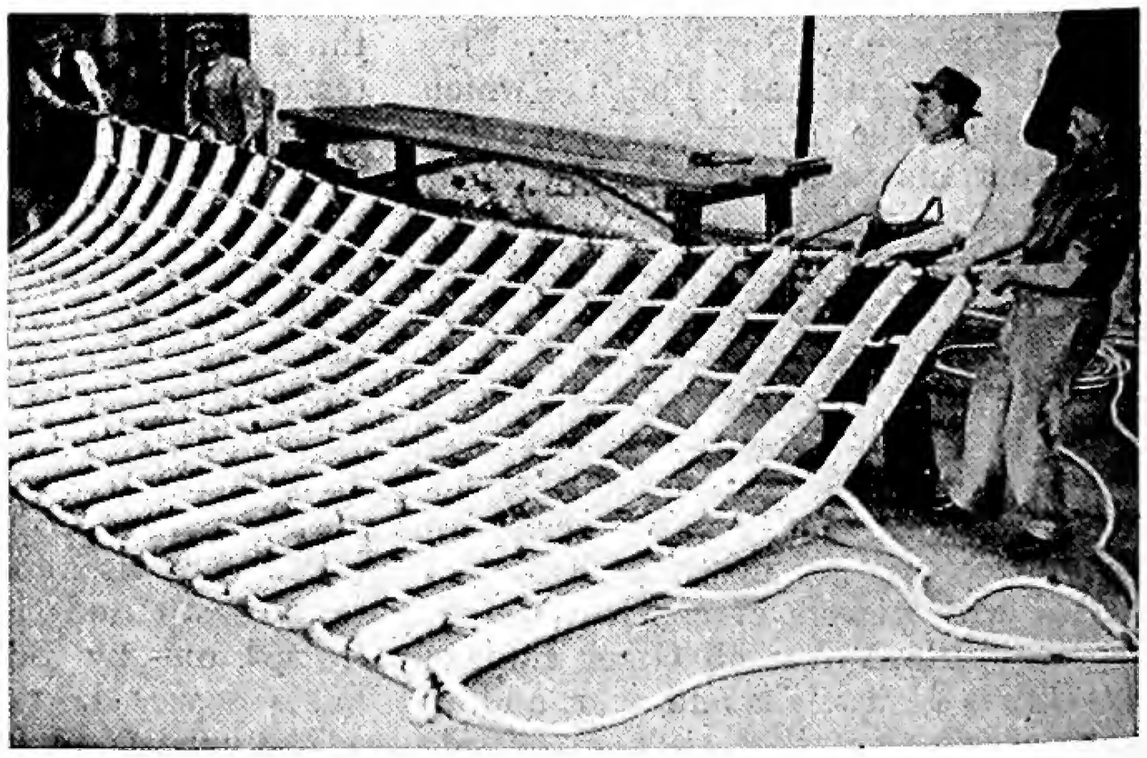
Another incident reported in October (an aftermath presumably of the Russo-Finnish war) was the sinking of the Finnish wooden steamer "Astrid" (603 tons gross) through striking a mine off Leningrad. Ten of her crew were stated to have been drowned.

The sinking of the first American ship during the war occurred in November, 1940. The "City of Rayville," a vessel of 5,883 tons gross owned by the American Pioneer Line,

First U.S.A. Ship Sunk

struck a mine and sank off Cape Otway on the evening of November 8. She was on her way to Melbourne from Adelaide. Only one member of the crew was lost. The previous night a British ship whose identity was not revealed was also sunk by striking a mine in the same waters. For the time being ships were forbidden to leave the port of Melbourne, and vessels approaching the Bass Strait were diverted. Essential supplies for Tasmania were temporarily carried by Naval vessels. It was announced that several mines had been swept up in this area, laid presumably by a disguised enemy raider.

There were further activities by enemy raiders during November. Within

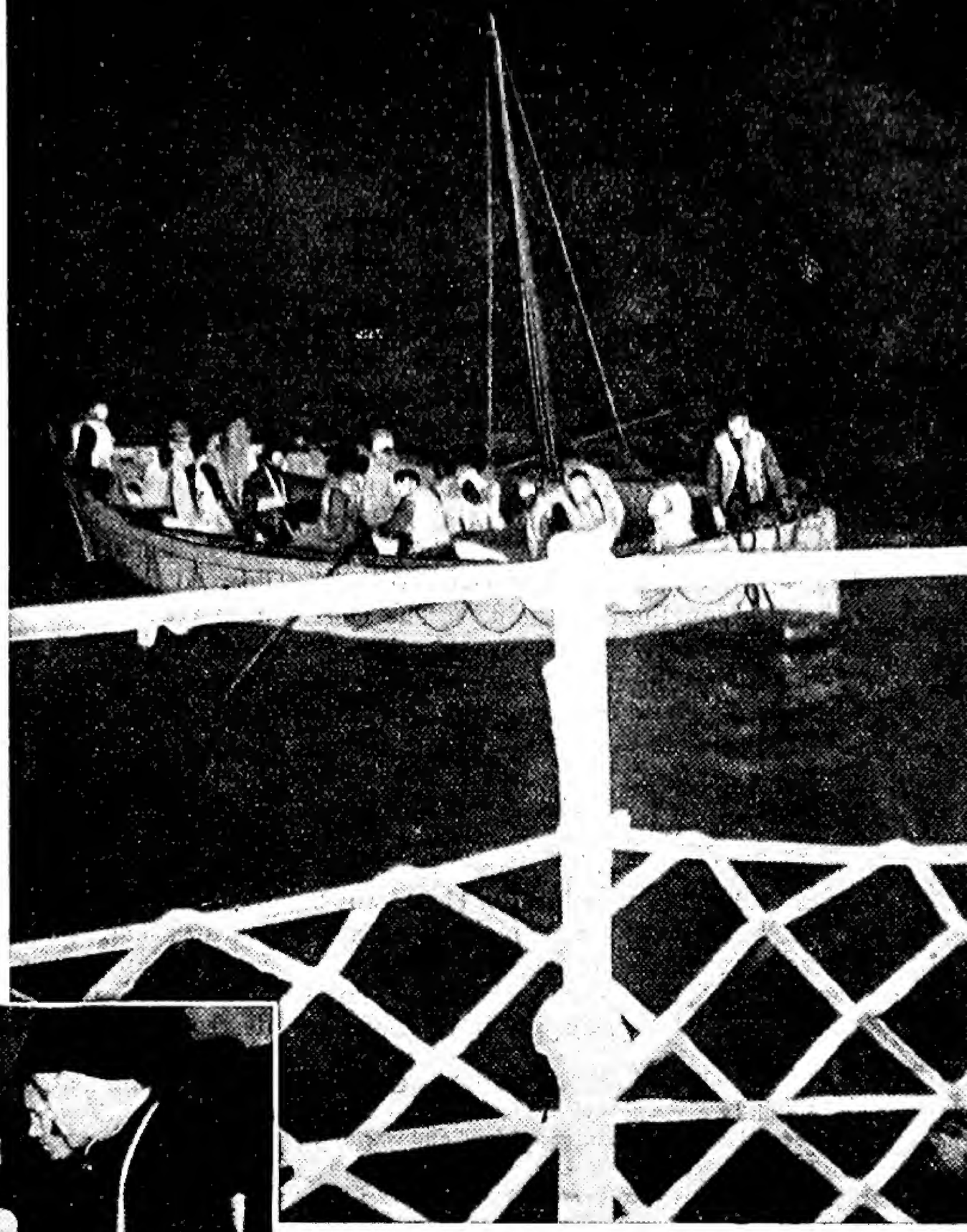


SAFETY NET FOR SEAMEN

No effort was spared by the Ministry of Shipping to provide adequate devices for sustaining and aiding the shipwrecked. Here is one—a floating net, constructed of cork on a rope framework. Made in varying sizes to support from 5 to 20 persons, when thrown overboard it automatically unrolled on the sea surface.

Photo, Topical

two days of each other reports were received of two vessels belonging to the Port Line being shelled by converted merchant ships—one off the West Indies and the other in the Indian Ocean. A wireless report that the "Port Hobart" was being shelled about 500 miles north-east of Puerto Rico was received by Mackay Radio. The sinking of the "Port Brisbane" (8,739 tons gross) and the "Maimo" (10,123 tons), the latter owned by the Shaw Savill and Albion Company, was announced by the Australian Navy Minister. Both liners were homeward bound from Australia. The raider, reported to be a modern motor-ship mounting four 4-in. guns and also torpedo tubes, overtook the "Port Brisbane" at night, turned searchlights on her and opened fire at a range of a little over a mile. The ship was abandoned and a party from the raider was sent on board to place time bombs; a torpedo was also fired before the raider made off. One of the boats escaped in the darkness and was picked up by an Australian warship. Nothing





VICTIMS OF THE SEA WAR

Typical of many such dramatic incidents, the provident rescue by an ex-American destroyer of 60 British seamen is shown in these photographs. At early dawn of a bitter winter's day the half-frozen survivors of the torpedoed freighter came alongside the warship (above). Located by their red distress signals, the men are hauled aboard to warmth and sustenance (left), showing all too plainly the intense strain of their grim thirteen-hour ordeal.

Photos, Topical

was heard of the other two boats until several weeks later; their fate is recounted in a later Chapter.

One of the German raiders was nearly accounted for in the running long-range action fought by the auxiliary cruiser "Carnarvon Castle" at the beginning of December in the South Atlantic—not far from where H.M.S. "Alcantara" and the raider "Narvik" had exchanged shots about four months previously. Both vessels sustained damage, but the raider, a disguised merchant ship, outpaced the former Union-Castle liner and escaped. The "Carnarvon Castle" was capable, in peacetime service, of a speed of about 22 knots.

The working of one side of the British blockade was well illustrated when several enemy merchant ships attempted to get back to Germany. Two of them, the "Rio Grande" and the "Helgoland," which left Central and South American ports during November, were not heard of after, so they might have reached their destination. A different story is to be told of four Hamburg-America Line ships which began loading supplies at Tampico, Mexico, where they had been sheltering since the outbreak of war. These were the "Orinoco" (9,660 tons), "Rhein" (6,031 tons), "Idarwald" (5,033 tons), and the "Phrygia" (4,137 tons).

On the stormy night of November 15, just before midnight, the four liners put to sea, weighing anchor at intervals of about three-quarters of an hour. The "Orinoco" had a full cargo of food-stuffs, fuel oil and other supplies, some of which were evidently intended for a German raider; the other vessels were in ballast. Two hours' steaming out from Tampico, in the Gulf of Mexico, one of the ships was seen to be ablaze and two others were making for port again at full speed, with the "Orinoco" limping behind with serious engine trouble. The "Phrygia" had been set on fire at the captain's orders and her sea-cocks opened. Back in Tampico, the captain declared that British warships had pursued his ship into territorial waters. The warships were, in fact, destroyers of the United States on neutrality patrol, whose only "warlike" actions were to exchange signals by

searchlight! The incident came to be known in Washington as the "Battle of Tampico Bay."

By November 29 the German captains had regained their nerve. The "Idarwald" and the "Rhein" again set sail (though one ran aground before reaching open waters). On December 8 the "Idarwald" was intercepted by H.M.S. "Diomede" in the Caribbean between Jamaica and Cuba. She was promptly scuttled and her crew made prisoner.

In the early hours of December 11 the sloop "Van Kinsbergen," of the Royal Netherlands Navy, sighted a suspicious vessel, which searchlights revealed to be the German liner "Rhein." The Germans set fire to their ship, and a boarding party from the Dutch vessel was unable to put out the flames. The "Rhein" was sunk by gunfire.

Besides the "Jervis Bay," two other British armed merchant cruisers were sunk in November—the "Laurentic," of 18,724 tons gross, and the Blue Funnel liner "Patroclus," of 11,314 tons. The "Patroclus" was picking up survivors from the other ship when she was attacked by a number of submarines simultaneously; from the two vessels about 140 lives were lost. The "Laurentic" was the fourth ex-passenger liner of the Cunard-White Star fleet to have been sunk while engaged in Naval duties. The "Queen Elizabeth," flagship of this fleet and the largest liner in the world, sailed in November, 1940, from New York, where she had been tied up in dock since her secret maiden voyage in February.

Enemy Losses up to December 31, 1940

	Sunk	Captured	Total
	Tons gross	Tons gross	Tons gross
GERMAN ..	989,000	268,000	1,257,000
ITALIAN ..	302,000	151,000	453,000
Totals .	1,291,000	419,000	1,710,000

In addition, about 46,000 tons of neutral shipping under enemy control had been sunk.

Following the loss of the "Laurentic" and "Patroclus," the Admiralty departed from its usual policy of silence to announce that two German submarines had just been sunk. This followed an earlier announcement that "two more Italian U-boats have been destroyed by our light forces."

Cargo Vessels Lost

The losses of several named tramp ships and cargo liners were reported in October, November and December, most of the reports emanating from the Mackay Radio in America. But there was good evidence that at least some of the messages on which these reports were based had been sent out by German ships as a trap. Among the more reliable reports were those of the sinking in the Atlantic of the "Tancred" (Norwegian), "Aghios Nicolaos" (Greek), the tanker "Frederick S. Fales" (British), "Antonios Chandris" (Greek), "Kabalo" (Belgian), "Eurymedon" (British), "Matheran" (British), "Balmore" (British), "Cree" (British), "Anten" (Swedish), "Tymeric" (British), and "Cetvrti" (Jugoslav). It was also reported that the "Lady Glanely" and "Goodleigh" had, with other ships, been sunk within a few hours of each other. Both of these ships—one a steamer and the other a motorship—were modern tramp vessels belonging to the Tatem Steam Navigation Co. of Cardiff.

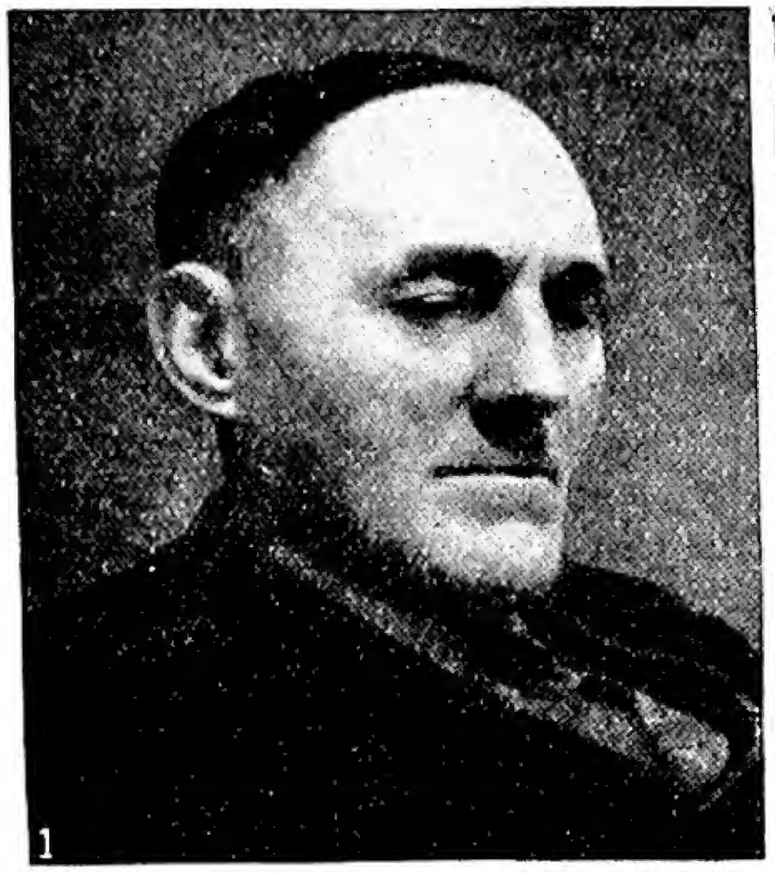
A particularly regrettable loss was that of the "Western Prince," torpedoed in the Atlantic six hours after midnight on Friday, December 13. She was a motorship of 10,926 tons, with a speed of 17 knots. On board were members of an important Canadian Government

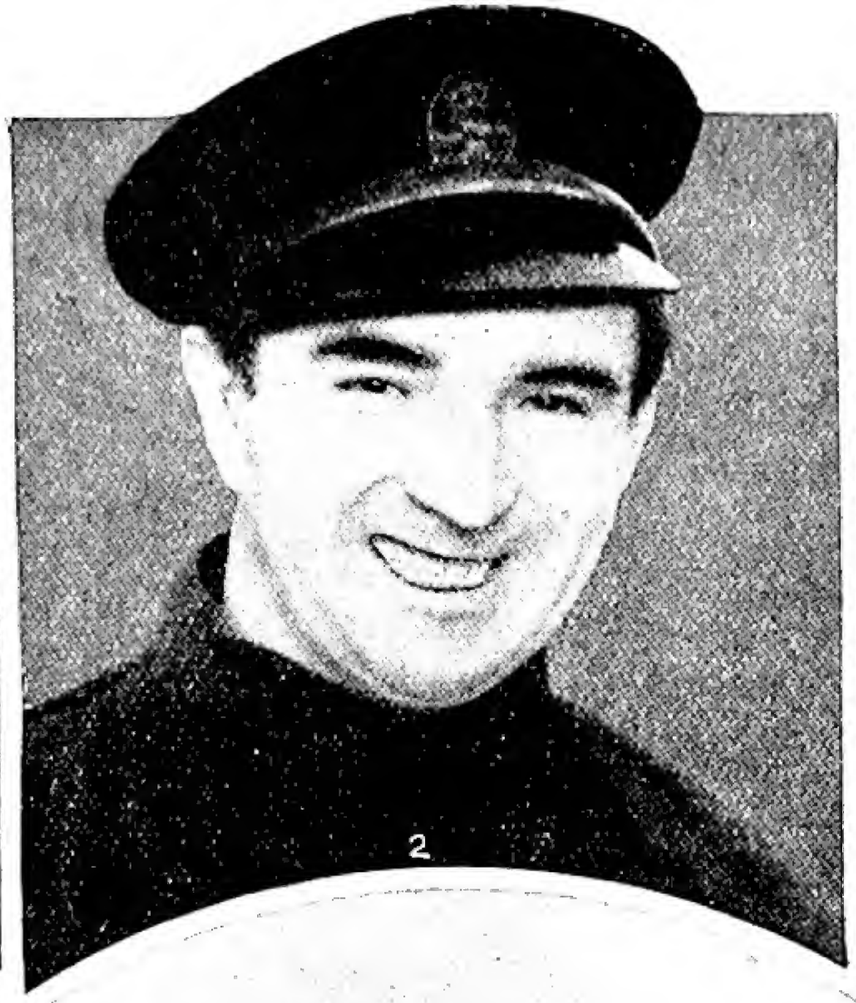
CONVOY CAPTAINS' CONFERENCE

Despite the enemy's vigorous and sustained attacks, the Merchant Navy continued to traverse the seas with its vital cargoes of food and war material. Employed since the war began, the convoy system worked reasonably well, its success being largely due to skilful cooperation between the ships and their escorts. Here is seen the essential conference before the convoy departs, when a Naval officer allocates stations, gives final instructions and examines the masters' papers.

Photo, G.P.U.

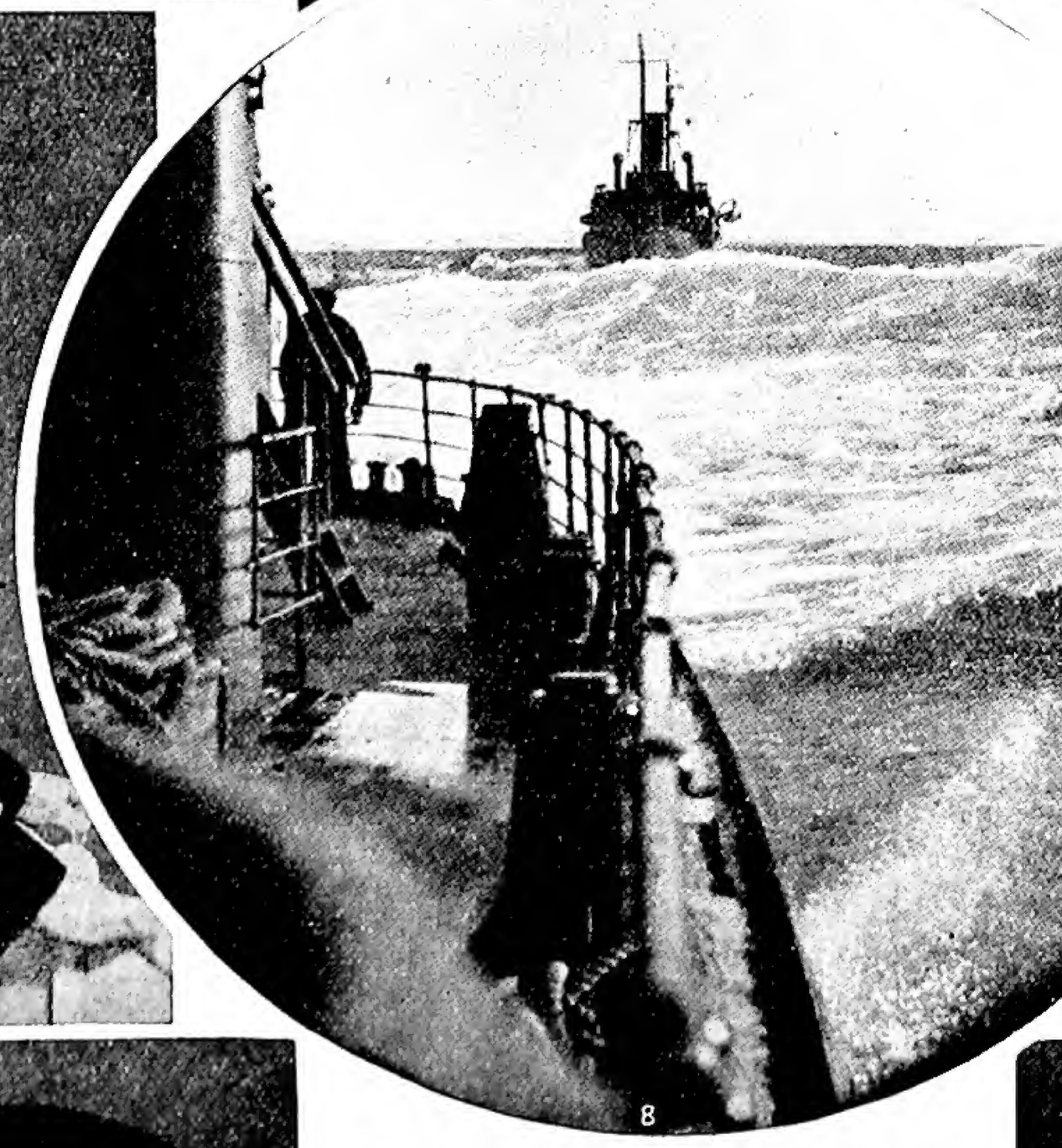


















SALUTE THE MERCHANT NAVY

Such men as these stand symbolical of the skill and bravery of the whole service. 1. Capt. J. Thomas : by masterly seamanship he saved the liner 'Empress of Japan' from enemy bombs. 2. Able Seaman S. H. Light : won the G.M. for stout-hearted bravery and endurance and saving nine of his shipmates. 3. Capt. P. B. Clarke : brought the blazing 'Sussex' safely to port. 4. Capt. S. G. Smith : in four months his ship 'Gloucester City' saved 135 men from vessels sunk by enemy action. 5. Capt. F. C. Pretty, D.S.C. : awarded the O.B.E. for handling his badly damaged ship so efficiently that a whole convoy was saved from danger. 6. Capt. S. Begg : his gallant leadership of the fire party on a burning tanker won him the O.B.E. 7. Capt. J. Reed : sounded three blasts on the siren as he went down with his ship, the 'Western Prince.' 8. Coastal Convoy.



MAROONED BY SURFACE RAIDERS

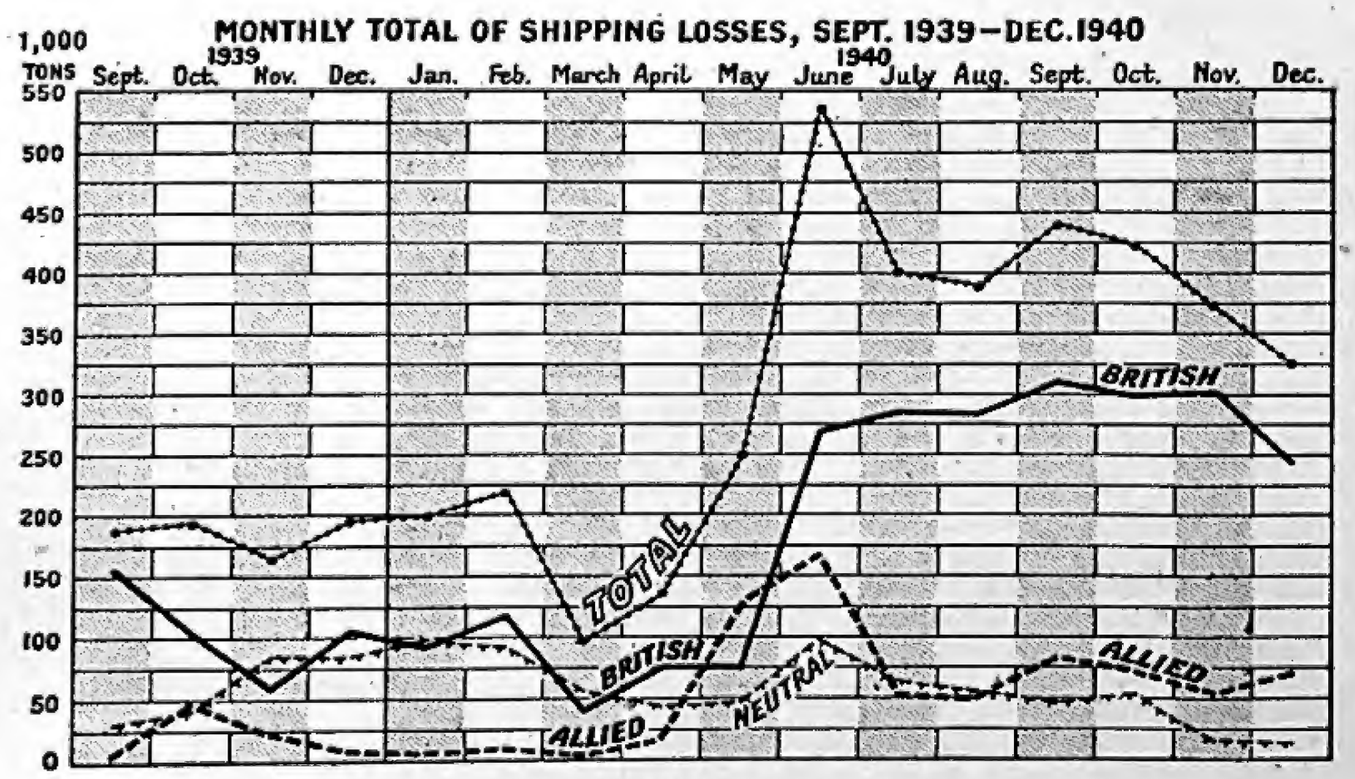
During the last four months of 1940 six British vessels and one Norwegian were caught by Nazi raiders in the South Pacific. On December 21 some 330 of the captured passengers and crews were landed on Emirau Island, north of Bismarck Archipelago, where this photograph of some of them was taken. An appeal for help was radioed from New Ireland, 40 miles distant, and the Royal Australian Navy came to the rescue on Christmas Day. Inset, Mrs. Elizabeth Plumb, stewardess on the 'Rangitane,' one of the sunk British ships, who received the B.E.M. for her bravery.

Photos, Sport & General; "News Chronicle"

Mission on its way to England. After spending many hours in lifeboats with the majority of the other passengers and crew, Mr. C. D. Howe, Canadian Minister of Munitions and Supplies, the Director-General of Munition Productions, and the executive assistant to the Ministry were rescued and landed at a West Coast port. The captain, refusing to enter a lifeboat he considered already full, had returned to his bridge and sounded the ship's siren as the "Western Prince" sank. The U-boat commander, indifferent to survivors, took flashlight photographs of the scene.

As the table in page 1408 shows, the losses of Naval trawlers were unusually heavy during October and November. Most of them were engaged in minesweeping, largely manned by their peacetime crews of fishermen. In a communiqué the Admiralty paid tribute to the "tenacity, courage and devotion to duty of our minesweeping forces."

While the losses of British and Allied ships continued at a disturbing level as the year closed, it should be emphasized that this was by no means a one-sided story. Though the oceans of the world were denied to them, Germany and Italy continued to suffer shipping losses at a rate which, relative to the size of their mercantile marines, was even more serious. A major part of their shipping was laid up in idleness; yet by the end of October German mercantile losses totalled 1,132,639 tons gross, or over 25 per cent of the pre-war fleet; and Italian losses were 365,661 tons, representing more than 10 per cent of Italy's pre-war tonnage. In addition, 44,190 tons of shipping formerly neutral but brought under enemy control had been sunk.



Chapter 135

INDIA'S WAR EFFORT: A REVIEW OF EVENTS DURING THE FIRST YEAR

India's Armed Forces: Effect of the Chatfield Committee's Recommendations —Operations in the Middle East—Attack on Sidi Barrani—Indian Navy and Air Force—Expanding Output of Munitions and Equipment—The Eastern Group Supply Conference—Difficulties with the Congress Party—Tragic Irony of the Disagreement

When the war began India was far removed from the scene of hostilities, and her war effort, though great, had not the impetus given by imminent danger. But as the months passed the war clouds approached ever nearer to the peninsula. France fell, Italy entered the struggle, and the conflict spread to Africa and to Asia, to outposts of the Imperial domain which were already garrisoned by Indian troops. At the same time the creation of a war zone in the Middle East emphasized as never before India's potentialities as a supply base for the Empire's armies. Spurred on by the new needs and the new dangers, India developed her contributions of men and material until in some respects they far surpassed the glorious efforts of the last war, when she put something like 1,500,000 trained men into the field.

The Army in India consisted in peacetime of some 160,000 men of the Indian Army and some 50,000 troops of the British Army. There were also about 15,000 Indian Territorials and the forces of the Indian States, numbering some 45,000. Then Nepal furnished 19,000 men for the Gurkha Brigade and the military police battalions on the North-West Frontier.

Shortly before the war the Chatfield Committee recommended the expansion and modernization of the Indian Army, and the reorganization already embarked upon was immensely stimulated by the coming of hostilities. Hitherto India had assumed responsibility only for the protection of her own frontiers and the maintenance of internal order, while Great Britain assumed full responsibility for India's protection against attack from without.

The Indian Army

The Chatfield Committee expressed the view that India's safety demanded cooperation with Britain in the defence of places outside her own bounds strategically essential to her but protection. This view was accepted by the Indian Government, and a number of external defence troops were included in the establishment of the Indian Army. Thus it was that quite early in the war 60,000 Indian troops were already overseas, helping to garrison Egypt, the Suez Canal, Aden, Singapore, and the Malay Peninsula—all places now regarded as being in the first line of Indian defence.

Resulting from this changed conception of India's defence problem, the Indian Army was greatly increased. It was announced that an army of some 500,000 men, fully trained, equipped and mechanized, was the objective, and a recruiting scheme was launched which swiftly produced sufficient troops to replace those who had gone overseas and also to provide a field army in India of the most modern type. One important innovation, dating from the summer of 1940, was that recruiting was thrown open to the whole of India, whereas in the past most of the recruits had been drawn from the Punjab. A second innovation was a great increase and speed-up of the process of Indianization. Before the war 21 units were being gradually officered entirely by Indians; now all units were thrown open to Indian officer recruitment. The period of training at the Dehra Dun Military Academy was reduced from two and a half years to 18 months, and a new training school for Indian commissioned officers was established at Mhow. By these means it was expected that the output of Indian officers would be over 1,100 a year.



INDIA TELLS BRITAIN

This effective poster was one of an Empire series issued by the Ministry of Information in 1940. Like its fellows it was designed to bring home to the British public the fact that the Dominions and Colonies were pulling their weight in the prosecution of the war. (See illus., p. 1183.)

Aid From Ruling Princes

On the outbreak of war all European British subjects in India were required to register for national service, and later national service was made compulsory at the wish of the European community themselves. Then the Princes of India were quick to show yet again their enthusiasm for the British Raj. In his review of India's war effort in the House of Commons on November 20, 1940, Mr. Amery paid a high tribute to the ruling Princes of India, who had their own great martial tradition and a long record of loyalty to the Imperial Crown. Their forces, he said, were being steadily enlarged and brought to a higher state of efficiency. Some 30 units were serving with His Majesty's forces in British India, and the Bikaner Camel Corps was already in the Middle East. Ruler after ruler had placed his personal services and the resources of his state unreservedly at the disposal of the King-Emperor.

Growing in strength from day to day, the Indian Army played an ever more conspicuous and responsible part in the struggle overseas. While the war was yet young, Indian troops were serving not only in the strategic outposts already mentioned, but in the Sudan and Somaliland, in the Western Desert of Egypt, in Burma and Hong Kong.

In the last weeks of 1940 an Indian division commanded by Major-General Beresford-Peirse, and comprising Moslems and Sikhs, Rajputs,



SINGAPORE REINFORCED

During 1940 the danger of the war spreading to the Far East had always to be reckoned with. Britain's defensive preparations centred around Singapore, which was periodically reinforced. Here are seen a contingent from India disembarking at the great Malayan base.

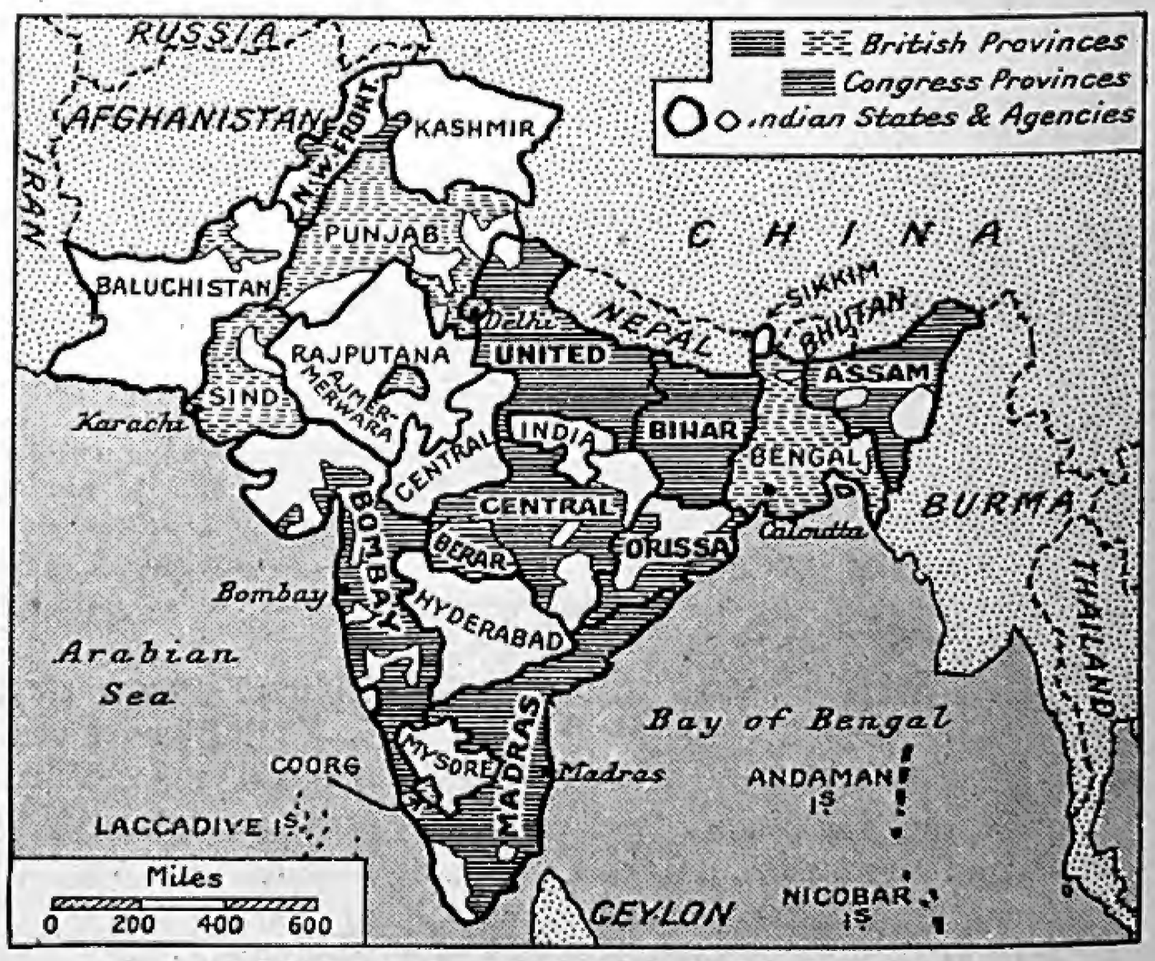
Photo, Associated Press

Jats, Garhwalis and Madrassis, covered itself with glory in the attack on Sidi Barrani (*see* Chapter 131). A few weeks more, and Indian troops were moving to the assault of Italy's Abyssinian empire, from the Sudan and British East Africa and through Eritrea. Even in England there was a small contingent of Indian troops, which played a worthy role in the Battle of France and the Dunkirk evacuation. An Indian Pioneer Corps was recruited in London by the War Office, and two ambulance units were also formed from Indians in Britain.

The Royal Indian Navy also had its part in the war. When the struggle began it consisted of five escort vessels, the patrol ship "Pathan," a survey vessel, a depot training ship, and sundry small craft, based on the naval dockyard at Bombay. Within a year or so it had been trebled, and its strength was steadily growing. At the outbreak of war a number of merchant ships were requisitioned and put into service, officered and manned partly by the Royal Indian Navy and partly from the various reserve forces — the Royal Indian Fleet Reserve, the Navy Reserve, the Naval Volunteer Reserve, and the Naval Communications Reserve. From the Indian shipyards proceeded mine-sweepers and anti-submarine patrol boats; larger seagoing craft were obtained from Australia, and from Britain came a number of modern sloops. At Bombay the naval dockyard was kept hard at work refitting vessels, carrying out repairs, and building light craft; another of its tasks was the de-Gaussing and arming of Indian merchant ships. Nor in an account of India's war effort at sea should we omit to mention the 30,000 Lascars who are amongst those who in the British Merchant Service face the daily perils of the sea.

Indian Air Force

In the air, too, India made rapid strides. In India, as in Britain, there is great enthusiasm for the air service, and young Indians, with their quick minds and sensitive hands, take naturally to flying. Before long quite a number of Indian pilots were serving in the R.A.F., and a number more were sent to Britain to complete their training. The Indian Air Force, formed in 1932, and composed, with the exception of some of its technical staff, entirely of Indians, made rapid progress. Training establishments were set up at Risalpur for pilots and air crews, and at Ambala for mechanics. Other establishments for both flying and technical training were soon in being, and the R.A.F. Volunteer Air Force Reserve,



POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF INDIA

India's vast population of some 375 millions is divided among British India and numerous Indian states. British India comprises fourteen provinces containing about four-fifths of the total population: in eight of these the Indian National Congress has a majority.



INDIAN MULE TEAMS SAFE BACK FROM DUNKIRK

Early in 1940 advance elements of the Indian Pioneer Corps arrived in France with their mules to take up station with the B.E.F. In the desperate days preceding the evacuation from Dunkirk they shared all hazards with their British comrades, and eventually arrived safely in Britain. Here is a detachment of them, led by a piper, exercising their mules near their West of England camp. (See also illus. p. 1424.)

Photo, Topical Press



PREPARING TO ATTACK THE ITALIANS: Throughout the long period of waiting which preceded the swift reduction of Mussolini's East African territories in 1941, advanced posts of British and Empire troops along the frontier between Eritrea and Abyssinia and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan maintained constant vigilance. Indian units, due for high distinction in the forthcoming campaign, were strongly represented, and men of an infantry brigade are here seen crossing the River Atbara (which at its nearest



INDIAN INFANTRY ADVANCE TOWARDS ERITREA

point runs some 30 miles from the Eritrean border). Camouflaged motor transport is being man-hauled across on a pontoon which guide-ropes (seen right) prevent from drifting. From the out-break of war India's land forces expanded fast : by the end of May, 1940, over 53,000 men had been enrolled, and in February, 1941, her total armed strength exceeded 500,000 men.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

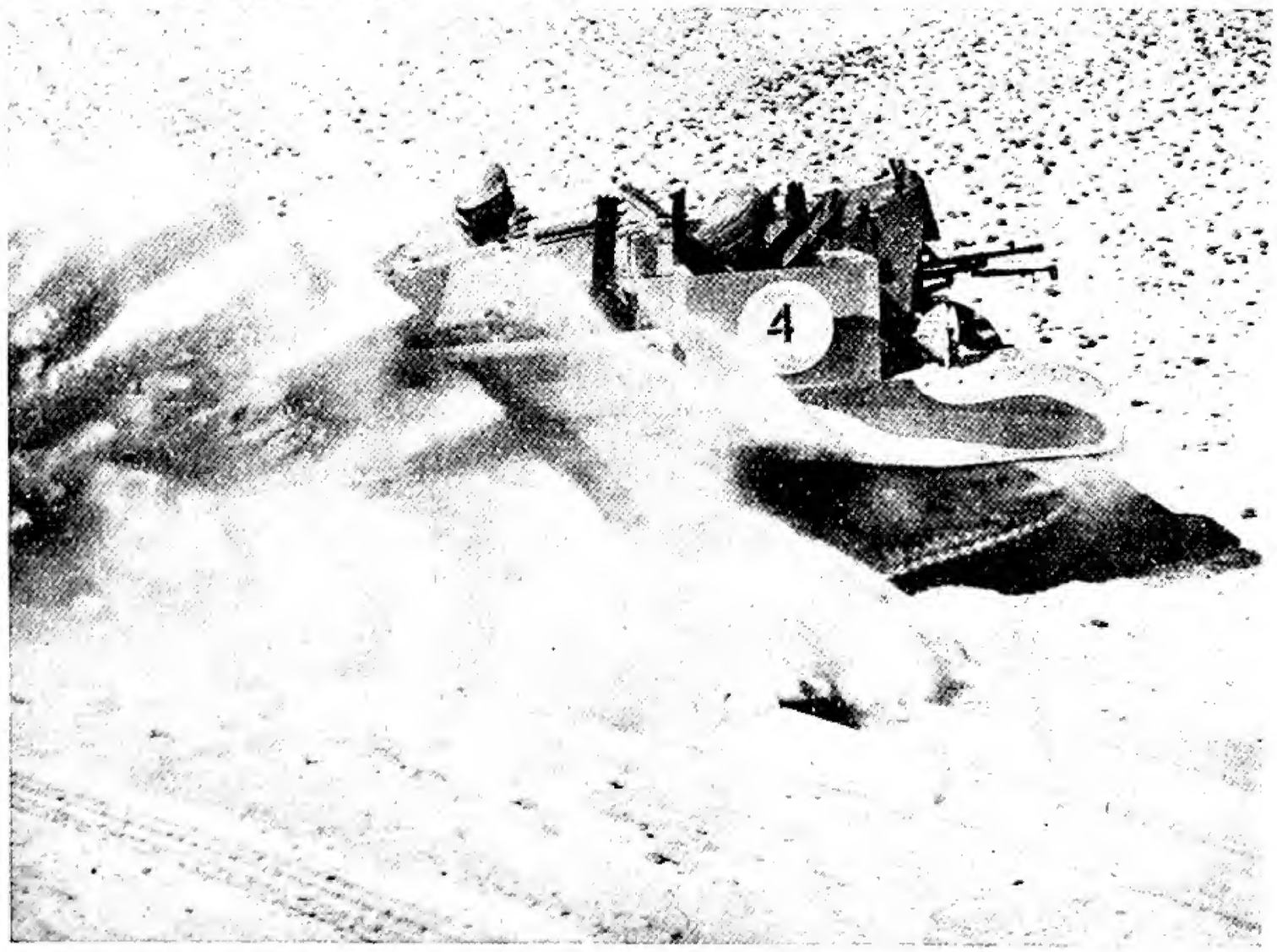


INDIAN LABOUR MAKES MUNITIONS FOR THE EMPIRE'S ARMED FORCES

Harnessing India's industrial capacity to the production of war material began slowly but increased apace, so that by the end of 1940 the country was turning out 90 per cent of her own war requirements. Rifles, machine-guns, small arms ammunition and artillery up to 6-in. calibre were among weapon production, while the manufacture of armoured vehicles in converted railway workshops had already begun. Here is such a shop adapted to making shells and hand grenades.

Photo, Sport & General





TRAINING FOR THE DESERT OFFENSIVE

Months of intensive preparation in the Western Desert fitted the Indian regiments of the Army of the Nile for the notable part they were to play in Gen. Wavell's offensive. These troops displayed an innate genius for the handling of fast, light, armoured vehicles over 'impossible' country, and above an Indian crew is seen in vigorous action with its Bren-gun carrier. The progressive policy of the Indian Army provided for the posting of Indian officers to all units : in the top photograph an Intelligence Officer is scrutinizing and mapping an enemy position.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright

charged primarily with coastal defence duties, was overwhelmed with volunteers in the same way as the army recruiting centres. It was designed that the force should consist in the first place of three squadrons of four flights each. In 1939 the first squadron was fully equipped, the second was formed in 1940, and the formation of further squadrons was put in hand. All over the country new aerodromes were established. Nothing except the imperious limitation imposed by the more urgent demand for machines in Britain and the Middle East stood in the way of the development of an Indian Air Force comparable in striking power with the Indian Army.

Air Raid Defence

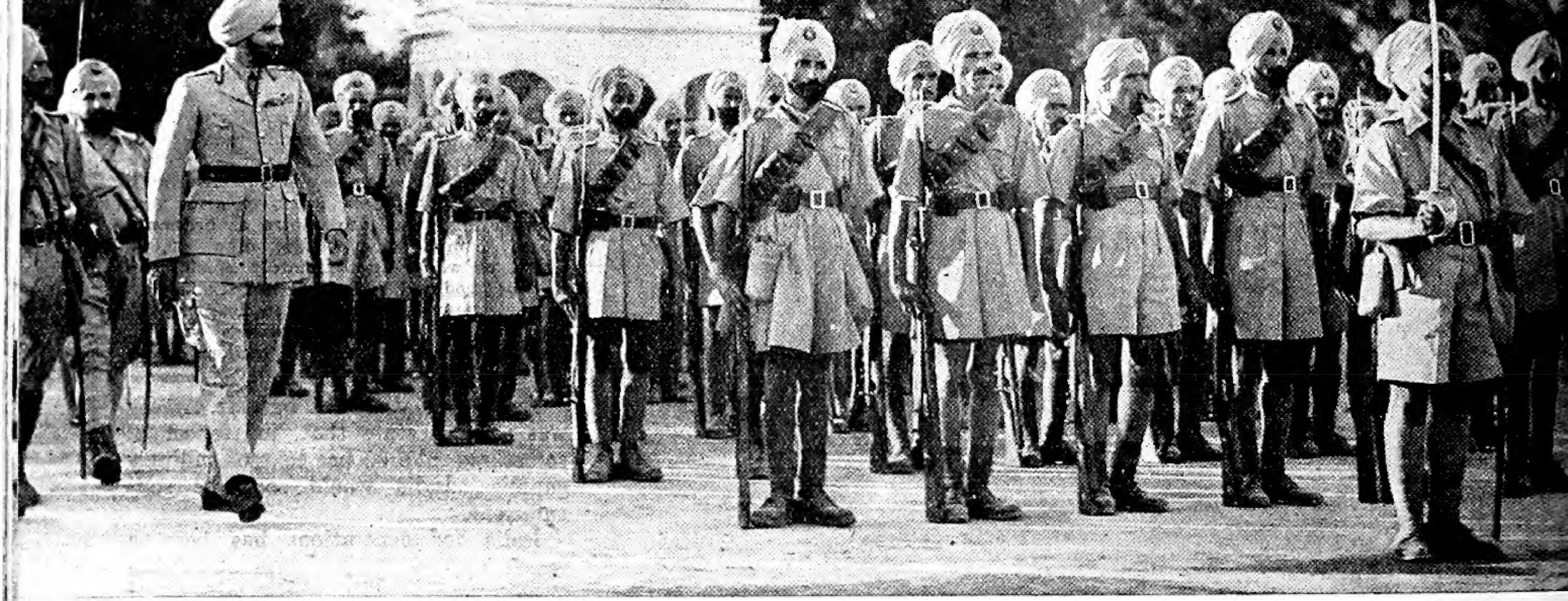
Although no enemy bombers appeared over India, although the nearest air raids were at Aden and Bahrein in the Persian Gulf, air raid precautions were taken in India on much the same lines as in Britain. In most of the cities and big towns bodies of European and Indian women volunteered to form work parties, making bandages and dressings, giving A.R.P. lectures and performing Civil Defence duties generally. Then an observer and warning organization, whose personnel was drawn for the most part from the Indian Observation Corps, was established to watch over the most vulnerable areas. This organization worked under military control, in close liaison with the Air Force.

Only one factor limited India's mighty war effort—equipment, and here again remarkable progress was made. In this respect the India of 1939 was far more advanced than the India of 1914, and with the coming of war the Government of India embarked on a huge policy of expansion, designed to enable India not only to meet the requirements of her own ever-expanding forces at home and overseas, but to become an arsenal for the supply of all the Imperial armies in the Middle and Far East, to whatever number of divisions they might be raised. In a broadcast from Simla on May 31, 1940, Sir Robert Cassels, Commander-in-Chief in India, stated :

" In the production of war supplies of every kind procurable in India, our supply organizations have already far outstripped the achievement of the Indian Munitions Board in the final year of the last war. The factories in charge of the Master-General of the Ordnance have been expanded with the utmost rapidity, and are now turning out six or seven times the quantity of lethal stores that they did eight or nine months ago. In the case of shell production, the out-turn has been multiplied no less than twelve times. Apart from the main items of arms and ammunition, what are known as ordnance stores comprise something like 40,000 items, of which approximately 20,000 can now be produced in India ; and the success of our supply organizations in dealing with the vast and intricate problems entailed by the requirements of a modern army has been outstanding."

Before the year was out Mr. Amery was able to state that, in respect of something like 90 per cent of military supplies, India would soon be self-sufficient.

India for generations has been a producer and exporter of industrial raw materials on a huge scale, and now she poured into the common stock vast quantities of cotton and wool, hemp, timber, oil seeds, pig iron and scrap, manganese, chrome and mica. More than a million Indian jute sandbags helped to cushion Britain against the air attacks which September brought in its train. The entire output of the Indian woollen industry was taken over by the British military authorities. Army boots for the United Kingdom were turned out at the rate of 125,000 pairs a month. The clothing factory at



INDIAN PRINCES' POTENT HELP FOR BRITAIN

Contributions in men, money and material to the Empire's war effort were made by the Indian Princes on a lavish scale, and by the end of the year forty units of all arms from the Indian States Forces were serving in India or on the war fronts. Famous among them were the Patiala State Forces, whose battle honours date from 1723 : here, in October, 1940, are seen the Yadavindra Regiment being inspected by their Maharaja prior to going on active service.

Photo, Fox

Shahjahanpur was extended to produce three or four times the output planned before the war, and new clothing factories were opened in Madras, Bombay, Calcutta, and the Punjab ; it was not long before the monthly output of garments exceeded the total that was reached in 1917, the peak year of the last war. The output of the ordnance factories was also represented by an ever-rising curve as additional labour was taken on, and in some cases treble shifts were operated. Within eight months from the outbreak of war the factories had increased their monthly output to between seven and twelve times their normal peacetime production, and from them streamed in unceasing flow rifles and bayonets, machine-guns and ammunition, artillery and shells, tractors and armoured vehicles, blankets and uniforms—indeed, all the paraphernalia of modern war.

At Bangalore the Indian Aircraft Company erected a factory to build military aircraft under the supervision of American experts. To provide 25,000 additional motor vehicles for the Indian Army the Indian branches of the General Motors and Ford organizations expanded their assembly plants. In Bombay and Calcutta the shipyards worked at full pressure in producing naval vessels and merchant ships ; even the electric cables for demagnetizing British merchant vessels were produced in India. Then the Indian chemical industry, led by the I.C.I. (India), Ltd., produced in enormous quantity a wide range of chemicals specifically of war-time application.

Oversea orders met from India, Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council, told the legislative assembly at Delhi on November 5, included 100,000,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition, 400,000 rounds of gun ammunition, and large quantities of explosives, including cordite and detonators, as well as millions of items of military clothing and equipment.

So great was the demand for labour in the ordnance factories that a limited measure of compulsory service was introduced to enable skilled technical workers to be transferred to where their work would be most valuable. At the

KING EMPEROR VISITS INDIANS IN ENGLAND

Having done their duty worthily and well in the fighting retreat to Dunkirk, the Punjabi mule contingent that served with the B.E.F. went into camp in Britain. In August, 1940, they were inspected by the King. Left, His Majesty shakes hands with a lieutenant. Right, two comrades help a veteran of 26 years' service to adjust his turban.

Photos, L.N.A. ; Associated Press





same time arrangements were made for training additional skilled workers on a large scale; from Britain there were dispatched to India a number of instructors, while to Britain came a number of young Indian workers to learn side by side with British workers in British factories not only the most up-to-date methods but something of the spirit of British industrial organization as displayed in the war effort.

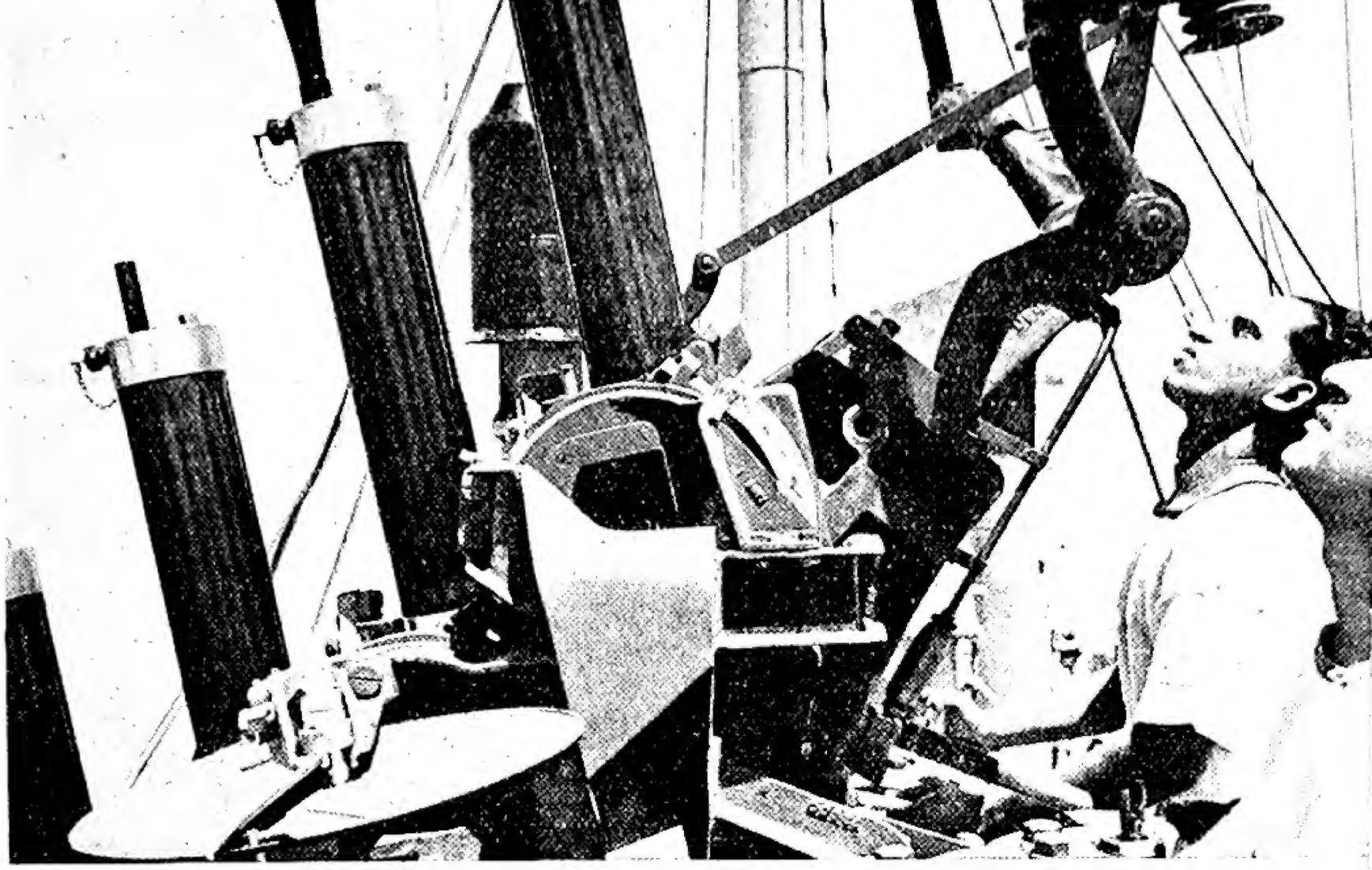
Survey of Industrial Problems

At the end of August, 1940, Mr. Herbert Morrison, then Minister of Supply, sent to India a special mission under the chairmanship of Sir Alexander Roger, charged with the survey of the country's industrial problems and requirements, and with advising the governments in London and Delhi of the most useful action to be taken for the increase of the Indian output. Sir Alexander Roger and his colleagues were in Delhi during the sittings of the Eastern Group Supply Conference, which was opened at Delhi by Lord Linlithgow on October 25 and continued its sittings until November 25. At this Conference Indian delegates sat side by side with representatives from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and, indeed, all the Commonwealth territories in the East.

The immediate object of the Conference, Mr. Amery told the House of Commons on November 20, was to see how in cooperation they could contribute, for their own defence and for the common cause, the very maximum of those elements of supply and equipment upon which the expansion of the Empire's armies must depend.

From India's point of view, went on the Secretary of State, this was a most significant gathering. It was a Conference of Empire held in India. That was a fact which was both a practical recognition of India's growing status in the Commonwealth and a contribution to a better understanding and a future closer collaboration between India and her British neighbours in the Southern Hemisphere. Its outcome was destined to be that growth in India's ability to provide her own defence, and that enrichment of her productive power, which were the real sources of a true independence, and which would do more than anything else to strengthen her claim to that full and equal partnership for mutual security and mutual welfare to which they wished to see her attain.

Financially, too, India did magnificently. All the funds connected with the war were supported most generously by all classes of the population, from



WITH THE ROYAL INDIAN NAVY

A highly efficient and active unit, the R.I.N. in 1940 possessed the largest forces in its history and was doing its share in keeping the Red Sea safe for troopships and supply patrols. (Top) manning the A.A. machine-guns of a sloop, and (bottom) one of these craft in dry dock.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright







INDIA SENDS PILOTS AND 'PLANES

In common with other members of the British Commonwealth, India subscribed handsomely for the provision of aircraft for the R.A.F. H.E.H. the Nizam of Hyderabad alone supplied two complete squadrons of fighters, and above is one of several Spitfires presented by the people of Assam. Three pilots from the Indian Air Force Volunteer Reserve, attached to the R.A.F. in England for training, are seen in the top photograph studying maps prior to a formation flight.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Central Press

the maharaja to the peasant. A large sum was remitted to London for the Lord Mayor's Fund for the victims of air raids. Ruling Princes gave millions to the Imperial War Chest, quite apart from valuable gifts in kind and the contribution made by their armed forces. And the women of India, through Lady Linlithgow's Silver Trinket Fund, provided numbers of ambulances for the Middle East, as well as a blood transfusion plant.

Introducing the Budget for the year 1940-41 in the Legislative Assembly on February 29, 1940, Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member, stated that, on the basis of a settlement with H.M. Government over the division of defence expenditure, India would pay only the normal peacetime cost of the army in India, adjusted for the rise in prices and India's own war measures, together with one crore of rupees (£750,000) towards the extra cost of maintaining India's external defence troops overseas.

India's Budget for 1940-41

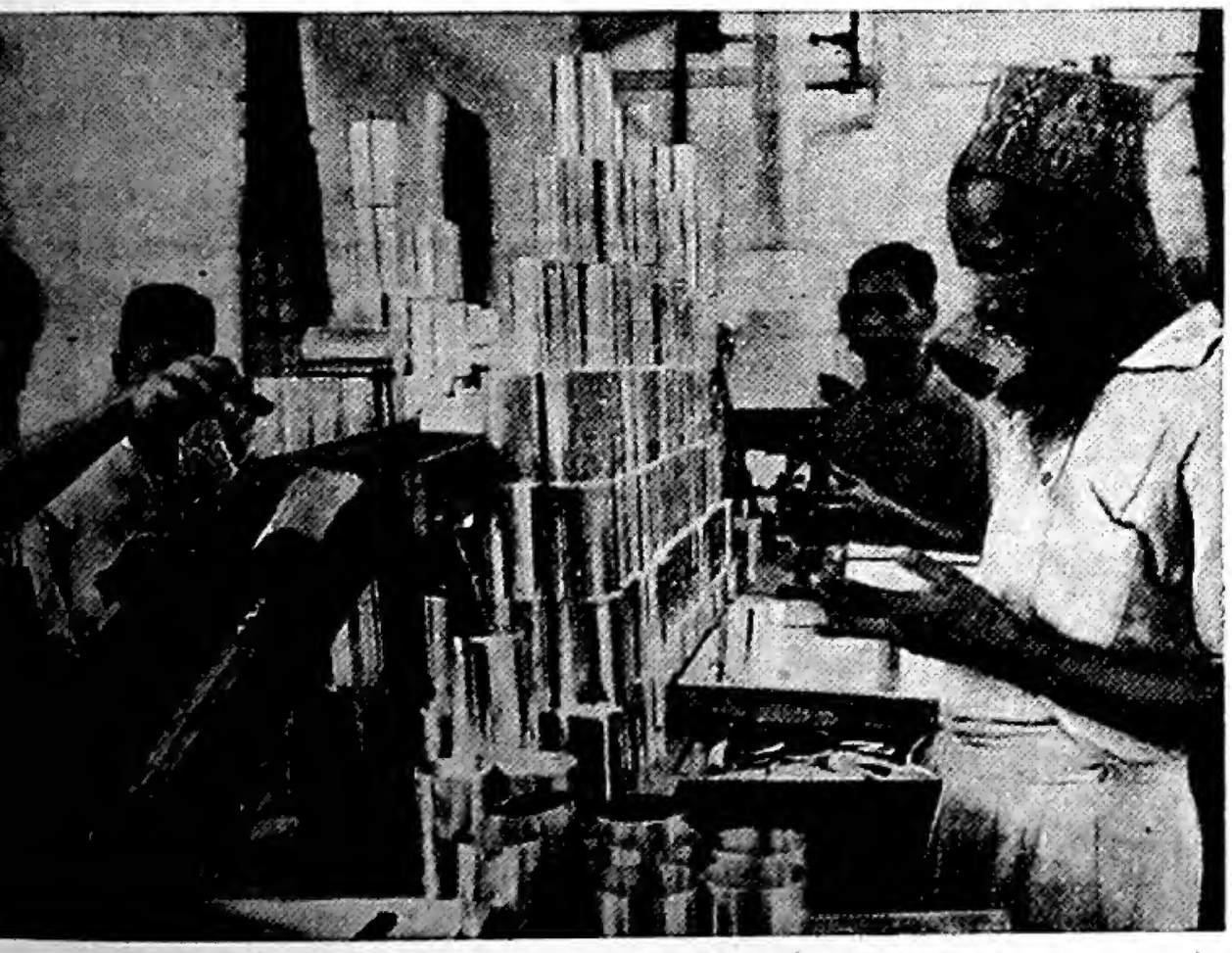
In large part, then, the cost of the Indian Expeditionary Force falls upon the British taxpayer. Even so, India's defence expenditure for 1940-41 was estimated at Rs. 53·52 crores, out of a total expenditure of Rs. 92·59 crores (say, £40 millions out of £69 millions). There was a deficit of 7·16 crores, and, to close the gap between revenue and expenditure, an Excess Profits tax was imposed, and the excise duties on sugar were increased as well as the duty on motor spirit. Income Tax and Super-Tax had already been increased far above pre-war levels. India is a poor country, however; with a population of nearly 400 millions the national income is estimated at only 2,000 crores (£1,500,000,000), equivalent to about £4 per head, compared with Great Britain's 45,000,000 with an income of between £6,000,000,000 and £7,000,000,000, or about £150 per head. In India, it is obvious, it is impossible for the great mass of the people to tighten their belts; indeed, the peasants are so poor that direct taxation falls entirely upon the non-agricultural classes. Moreover, whereas in Britain war has improved the economic status of great sections of the populace, in India it has had the opposite effect upon the *ryot* (agriculturist), whose slender income has been reduced following upon the closing of so many markets to the exporters of India's raw materials.

Great as was India's war effort in that first year of war, it might have been greater but for unfortunate differences, not only of caste and creed but in matters arising out of the war. When war was declared in 1939 India's belligerency was proclaimed by the Viceroy without the spokesmen of politically conscious opinion being consulted. In a resolution passed at Ramgarh in March, 1940, on the motion of Pandit Nehru, Congress, India's largest political party, put it on record that it regarded "the declaration by the British Government of India as a belligerent country without any reference to the people of India, and the exploitation of India's resources in this war, as an affront to them which no self-respecting and freedom-loving people can accept or tolerate. The recent pronouncements made on behalf of the British Government in regard to India demonstrate that Great Britain is carrying on the war fundamentally for imperialist ends and for the preservation and strengthening of her Empire, which is based on the exploitation of the people of India, as well as of other Asiatic and African countries. Under these circumstances, it is clear that the

Congress cannot, in any way, directly or indirectly, be a party to the war, which means continuance and perpetuation of this exploitation. The Congress, therefore, strongly disapproves of Indian troops being made to fight for Great Britain, and of the drain from India of men and material for the purpose of the war. Neither the recruiting nor the money raised in India can be considered to be voluntary contributions from India. . . . The Congress hereby declares again that nothing short of complete independence can be accepted by the people of India." This intransigent attitude was only slightly modified by a resolution of the Congress Working Committee at Delhi, on July 7, which demanded that a provisional national government should be constituted at the Centre as the first step to the attainment of complete independence. "Since you and the Secretary of State for India," wrote Mr. Gandhi to Lord Linlithgow on September 30, "have declared that the whole of India is voluntarily helping the war effort, it becomes necessary to make clear that the vast majority of the people of India are not interested in it. They make no distinction between Nazism and the double autocracy that rules India."

But Congress does not represent the whole of India. Bitterly opposed to it is the Moslem League, whose attitude was summarized by its leader, Mr. Jinnah, at New Delhi on September 29. Moslems whose fate was linked with that of Britain were, he stated, fully alive to the dangers created by the war, and were prepared to give every assistance in men and money. But for their assistance to be of real value they must be placed in a position of authority in the Government, both at the Centre and in the provinces. Then the second great anti-Congress body, the Hindu Mahasabha, also expressed their willingness to cooperate in the war effort, provided that Mr. Jinnah's scheme for the partitioning of India into Moslem and Hindu regions were disapproved, and that they themselves were given seats on the Executive Council and the proposed War Advisory Council. The Moslem League and the Hindu Mahasabha are at one with Congress in demanding independence for India—though their definitions of that independence are by no means identical.

As 1940 closed the position in India was revealed as one of tragic irony. Every party was opposed to Nazism, yet the leaders of democracy—former prime ministers, Indian M.P.s, Trade Union officials, leaders of cultural organizations and of the women's movement, Moslems and Hindus and Christians—were being imprisoned because of their opposition to their country's war effort. Here was a situation which called for statesmanship of the highest order, for understanding and supreme vision.

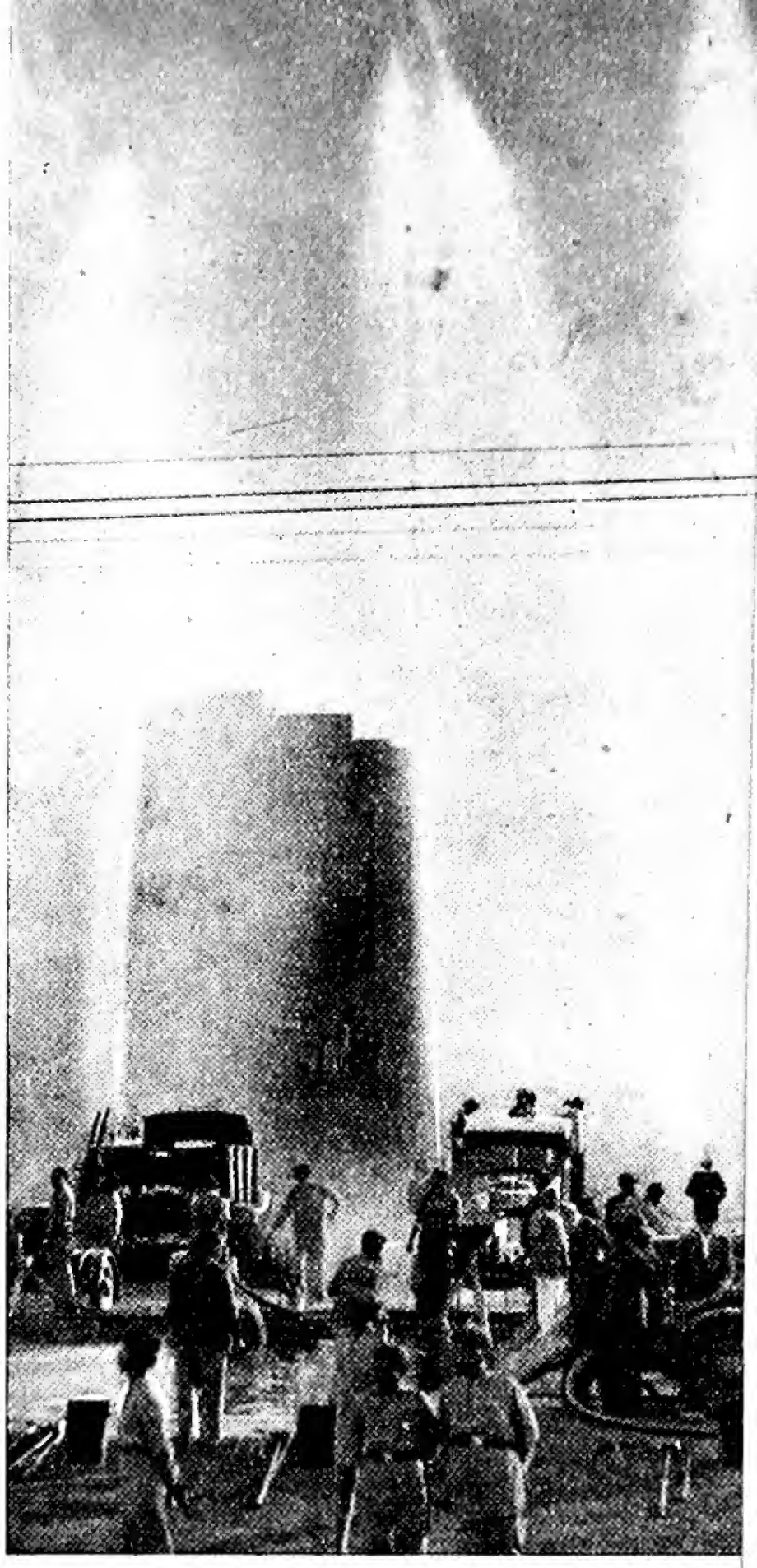


INDIA'S WAR FACTORIES IN ACTION

(Top) Mahomedan workers in a munitions centre where heavy bomb containers, ammunition-case linings, fuse containers, and bomb and shell components were among the war material produced. (Bottom) A fleet of Army trucks turned out at a car factory in Bombay which provided ambulances and other motor vehicles for the Indian Army.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright





A.R.P. IN LAHORE

Evidence of the thoroughness of India's participation in the war was the creation of an efficient Civil Defence organization. Special attention was paid to Air Raid Precautions, and here is seen an impressive demonstration by fire-pumps at Lahore.

Photo, Topical

GREATEST NAVAL BLOC IN HISTORY

An Agreement of far-reaching importance to the two great English-speaking democracies was made on September 2, 1940. By it Great Britain undertook to lease territory in her transatlantic colonies to the United States for air and naval bases, receiving in return the transfer to the Royal Navy of fifty American destroyers. We give below the text of the Agreement and Mr. Churchill's announcements in the House of Commons before and after its conclusion. The Pact was eventually signed in London on March 27, 1941.

MR. CHURCHILL, IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, AUGUST 20, 1940:

Some months ago we came to the conclusion that the interests of the United States and of the British Empire required that the United States should have facilities for the naval and air defence of the Western Hemisphere against the attack of a Nazi power which might have acquired temporary but lengthy control of a large part of Western Europe and its formidable resources. We had, therefore, decided spontaneously, and without being asked or offered any inducement, to inform the Government of the United States that we should be glad to place such defence facilities at their disposal by leasing suitable sites in our transatlantic possessions for their greater security against the unmeasured dangers of the future. . . .

There is, of course, no question of transference of sovereignty, or of any action being taken without the consent or against the wishes of the various Colonies concerned, but for our part H.M. Government is entirely willing to accord defence facilities to the United States on a 99 years' leasehold basis, and we feel sure that our interests no less than theirs, and the interests of the Colonies themselves and of Canada and Newfoundland, will be served thereby. . . .

MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN, BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES, TO MR. CORDELL HULL, SECRETARY OF STATE, SEPT. 2:

Sir,—I have the honour, under instructions from his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to inform you that in view of the basis of friendship and sympathetic interest of his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in the national security of the United States and their desire to strengthen the ability of the United States to cooperate effectively with other nations of the Americas in defence of the Western Hemisphere, his Majesty's Government will secure the grant to the Government of the United States, freely and without consideration, of the lease for immediate establishment and use of naval and air bases and facilities for the entrance thereto and operation and protection thereof, on the Avalon Peninsula and on the southern coast of Newfoundland, and on the East coast and on the Great Bay of Bermuda.

Furthermore, in view of the above and in view of the desire of the United States to acquire additional Air and Naval bases in the Caribbean and in British Guiana, and without endeavouring to place a monetary or commercial value upon the many tangible and intangible rights and properties involved, his Majesty's Government will make available to the United States for immediate establishment and use of Naval and Air bases and facilities for entrance thereto and operation and protection thereof, on the Eastern side of the Bahamas, the Southern coast of Jamaica, the Western coast of St. Lucia, the West coast of Trinidad in the Gulf of Paria, in the Island of Antigua, and in British Guiana within 50 miles of Georgetown, in exchange for Naval and Military equipment and material which the United States will transfer to his Majesty's Government.

All of the bases and facilities referred to in the preceding paragraphs will be leased to the United States for a period of 99 years, free from all rent and charges other than such compensation to be mutually agreed on to be paid by the United States in order to compensate the owners of private property for the loss by expropriation or damage arising out of the establishment of the bases and facilities in question.

His Majesty's Government in the leases to be agreed upon will grant to the United States for the period of the leases all the rights, power and authority within the bases leased, and within the limits of territorial waters and air spaces adjacent or in the vicinity of such bases, necessary to provide access to and defence of such bases and appropriate provisions for their control.

Without prejudice to the above-mentioned rights of the United States authorities and their jurisdiction within the leased areas, the adjustment and reconciliation between the jurisdiction of the authorities of the United States within these areas and the jurisdiction of the authorities of the territories in which those areas are situated shall be determined by common agreement.

The exact location and bounds of the aforesaid bases, the necessary seaward, coast and anti-aircraft defences, the location of sufficient military garrisons, stores and other necessary auxiliary facilities shall be determined by common agreement. His Majesty's Government are prepared to designate immediately experts to meet with experts of the United States for these purposes. . . .

MR. CORDELL HULL TO THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN, SEPT. 2:

Excellency,—I am directed by the President to reply to your Note as follows:

The Government of the United States appreciates the declarations and the generous action of his Majesty's Government, as contained in your communications, which are destined to enhance the national security of the United States and greatly to strengthen its ability to cooperate effectively with the other nations of the Americas in the defence of the Western Hemisphere. It therefore gladly accepts the proposals.

The Government of the United States will immediately designate experts to meet with experts designated by his Majesty's Government to determine upon the exact location of Naval and Air bases mentioned in your communication under acknowledgment.

In consideration of the declarations above quoted, the Government of the United States will immediately transfer to his Majesty's Government 50 United States Navy Destroyers generally referred to as the 1,200-tons type.

MR. CHURCHILL, IN A SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, SEPTEMBER 5:

The memorable transactions between Great Britain and the United States, which I foreshadowed when I last addressed the House, have now been completed, to the general satisfaction of the British and American peoples, and to the encouragement of our friends all over the world. It would be a mistake to try to read into the official Notes which have passed more than the documents bear on their face. The exchanges which have taken place are simply measures of mutual assistance rendered to one another by two friendly nations in a spirit of confidence, sympathy and good will. These measures are linked together in a formal agreement. They must be accepted exactly as they stand. Only very ignorant persons would suggest that the transfer of American destroyers to the British flag constitutes the slightest violation of international law, or affects in the smallest degree the non-belligerency of the United States.

I have no doubt that Herr Hitler will not like this transference of destroyers, and I have no doubt that he will pay the United States out, if ever he gets the chance. That is why I am very glad that the armed air and naval frontiers of the United States have been advanced along a wide arc into the Atlantic Ocean, and that this will enable them to take danger by the throat while it is still hundreds of miles away from their own land. The Admiralty tell us that they are very glad to have these 50 destroyers and that they will come in most conveniently to bridge the gap which inevitably intervenes before our considerable wartime programme of new construction comes into service. . . .

Chapter 136

AMERICA'S STAND FOR FREE DEMOCRACY: THE SECOND HALF OF 1940

British Sites for U.S. Naval and Air Bases—Joint Board of Defence Set Up With Canada—Surplus U.S. Destroyers for Britain—The Burke-Wadsworth Conscription Bill—Lindbergh and the Isolationists—American Reactions to the Battle of Britain—Presidential Campaign: Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie Nominated—Roosevelt Elected for a Third Term: His Rallying Call

"THESE two great organizations of the English-speaking democracies, the British Empire and the United States," said Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons on August 20, "will have to be somewhat mixed up together in some of their affairs for mutual and general advantage. For my own part, looking out upon the future, I do not view the process with any misgivings. I could not stop it if I wished. No one could stop it. Like the Mississippi, it just keeps rolling along. Let it roll. Let it roll on full flood, inexorable, irresistible, benignant, to broader lands and better days."

Certainly, during 1940, if the stream of Anglo-American cooperation was not at full flood, it was powerful, flowing swiftly and ever more rapidly. Perhaps the most important and significant of the events carried on its broad bosom during the autumn months was the grant or lease by Britain to the United States of British territories in North America where the U.S.A. might construct naval and air bases for the better defence of the whole North American continent.

First official news of this truly epoch-making development was released by President Roosevelt himself at a press conference on August 16. Seated at his desk at the White House, the President told the assembled newspapermen that he had three announcements to make of very great importance, present and future. The first was that the United States Government had entered into conversations with the British Government with regard to the acquisition of naval and air bases for the defence of the Western Hemisphere, and especially of the Panama Canal. Secondly, his Government was carrying on conversations with the Canadian Government concerning the defence of North America. Finally, the President announced that, at the invitation of the British Government, military and naval officers of the U.S.A. (Major-General Emmons, Commanding G.H.Q. United States Air Force; Brigadier-General Strong, Assistant Chief of Staff of the War Plans Division; and Rear-Admiral Ghormley, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations) had been dispatched to the United Kingdom as observers of the great battle now raging in Britain's skies, and were already in London.

Swift to improve the favourable atmosphere, the President the next day met Mr. Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister, at Ogdensburg, on the American side of the St. Lawrence. The two statesmen conferred in the President's private railway coach, and the meeting resulted in an agreement that a permanent joint board of defence should be set up by the two countries



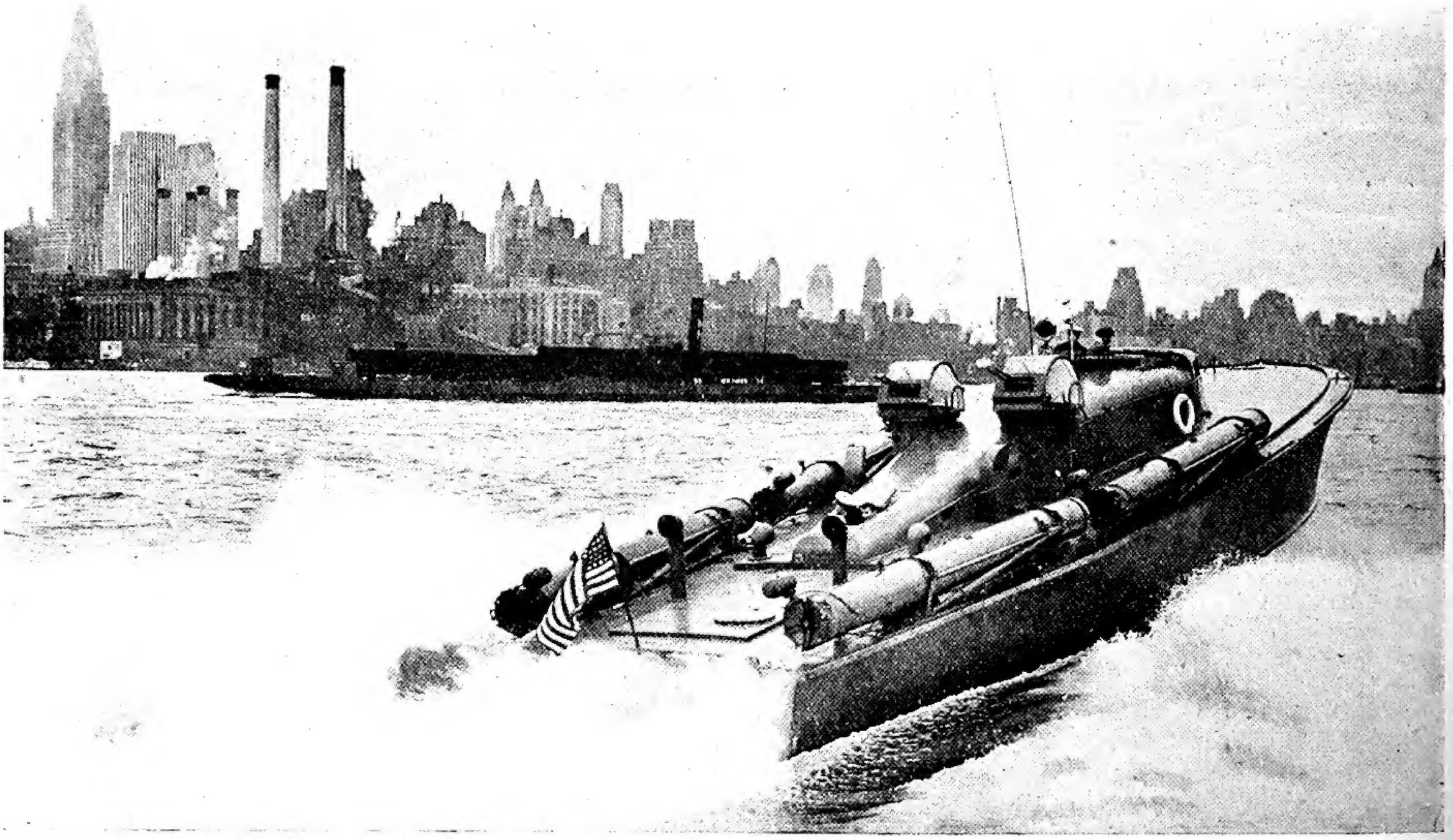
THE OGDENSBURG MEETING

On August 17, 1940, the day after his historic announcement of the leasing to the U.S.A. of British territories in North America, President Roosevelt met Mr. Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister, at Ogdensburg, N.Y. Here, after a four-hour conference, it was agreed that there should be immediately set up a Joint Board for the Defence of Canada and the United States; later in the month the Board held its first meeting at Ottawa (see illus. p. 1237). Mr. Roosevelt is here seen with Mr. Mackenzie King, Mr. Henry Stimson (U.S. Secretary of War), and General Hugh A. Drum (Commander of 1st U.S. Army) after the meeting.

Photo, Fox

Then came a reference to a subject which had recently been frequently discussed on both sides of the Atlantic —the transference of 50 American destroyers to Britain. This subject, Mr. Roosevelt insisted, was an entirely separate matter. But he insisted so frequently and emphatically that his hearers left the conference convinced that the two questions were indissolubly linked. And why not? they argued; why should Britain be expected to make so unprecedented a concession to the United States with no *quid pro quo?*

to commence an immediate study of land, sea and air problems, and consider in a broad sense the defence of the northern half of the Western Hemisphere. Two years before, when making his famous goodwill visit to Canada, President Roosevelt had declared that "the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other empire." And two days later Mr. Mackenzie King had rejoined with the promise that Canada would see to it that "enemy forces should not be able



'MOSQUITO FLEET' FOR AMERICA'S TWO-OCEAN NAVY

The autumn of 1940 saw the putting into operation of America's huge naval shipbuilding programme sanctioned in the Naval Expansion Bill of July. Among the wide variety of craft provided for was a fleet of nearly fifty small 60-knot motor torpedo-boats, one of which is here seen speeding down the East River, New York. This stern view clearly shows the vessel's four torpedo-tubes and twin machine-gun turrets.

Photo, Wide World

to pursue their way by land, sea or air to the United States across Canadian territory." The Ogdensburg meeting carried the understanding a step farther. Now it was plain to all the world that an attack on Canada would be an attack on the U.S.A., one to be resisted at once with all the armed might of the Republic.

In Britain, as in America, these moves were regarded with the utmost satisfaction. Delivering in the House of Commons the speech from which we have already quoted a passage that history will surely remember, Mr. Churchill, on August 20, said: "Some months ago we came to the conclusion that the interests of the United States and of the British Empire both required that the United States should have facilities for the naval and air defence of the Western Hemisphere against the attack of a Nazi power which might have acquired temporary but lengthy control of a large part of Western Europe and its formidable resources. We had, therefore, decided spontaneously, and without being asked or offered any inducement, to inform the Government of the United States that we should be glad to place such defence facilities at their disposal by leasing suitable sites in our transatlantic possessions for their greater security against the unmeasured dangers of the future."

"There is, of course, no question of any transference of sovereignty," Mr. Churchill went on, "or of any action being taken without the consent or against the wishes of the various Colonies concerned, but for our part His Majesty's Government is entirely willing to accord defence facilities to the United States on a 99 years' leasehold basis, and we feel sure that our interests no less than theirs, and the interests of the Colonies themselves and of Canada and Newfoundland, will be served thereby."

The next event was the presentation on September 2 by Lord Lothian, Britain's Ambassador in Washington, to Mr. Cordell Hull, of a note stating that "in view of the basis of friendship and sympathetic interest of His Majesty's Government in the national security of the United States, and their desire to strengthen the ability of the United States to cooperate effectively with other nations of the Americas in defence of the Western Hemisphere," the British Government would secure to the U.S.A. facilities for the establishment of naval and air bases on the south coast and the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, and Great Bay, Bermuda. The grant of these bases was made "freely and without consideration." Furthermore, in view of the desire of the United States to acquire similarly bases in the Caribbean Sea, His Majesty's Government would make available to the U.S.A. similar facilities in the Bahamas, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Trinidad, Antigua, and British Guiana. These bases would be leased to the U.S.A. for 99 years, free from all rent and charges other than compensation to be paid by the United States to the owners of private property affected, and in exchange Britain would receive certain naval and military equipment and material. Mr. Cordell Hull revealed in his reply to the British Government's note that the "equipment and material" took the shape (at least in part) of 50 of America's surplus destroyers—vessels which were obsolete in the sense that they were over 16 years old, yet were perfectly serviceable, and would constitute a most timely strengthening of Britain's naval forces now strained to the utmost in the Battle of the Atlantic. (For text of Note, *see* page 1428.)

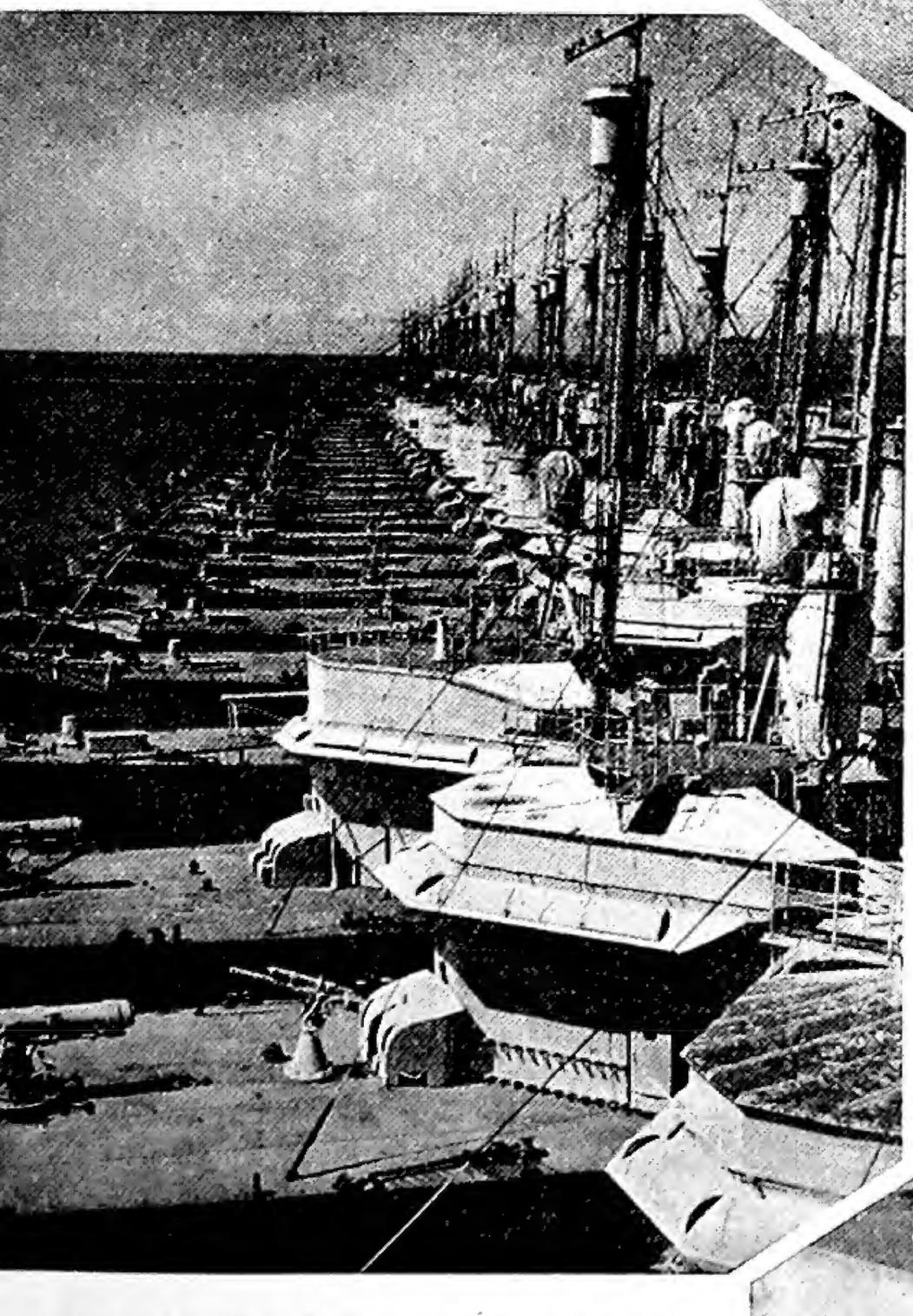
U.S. Bases in British Territory

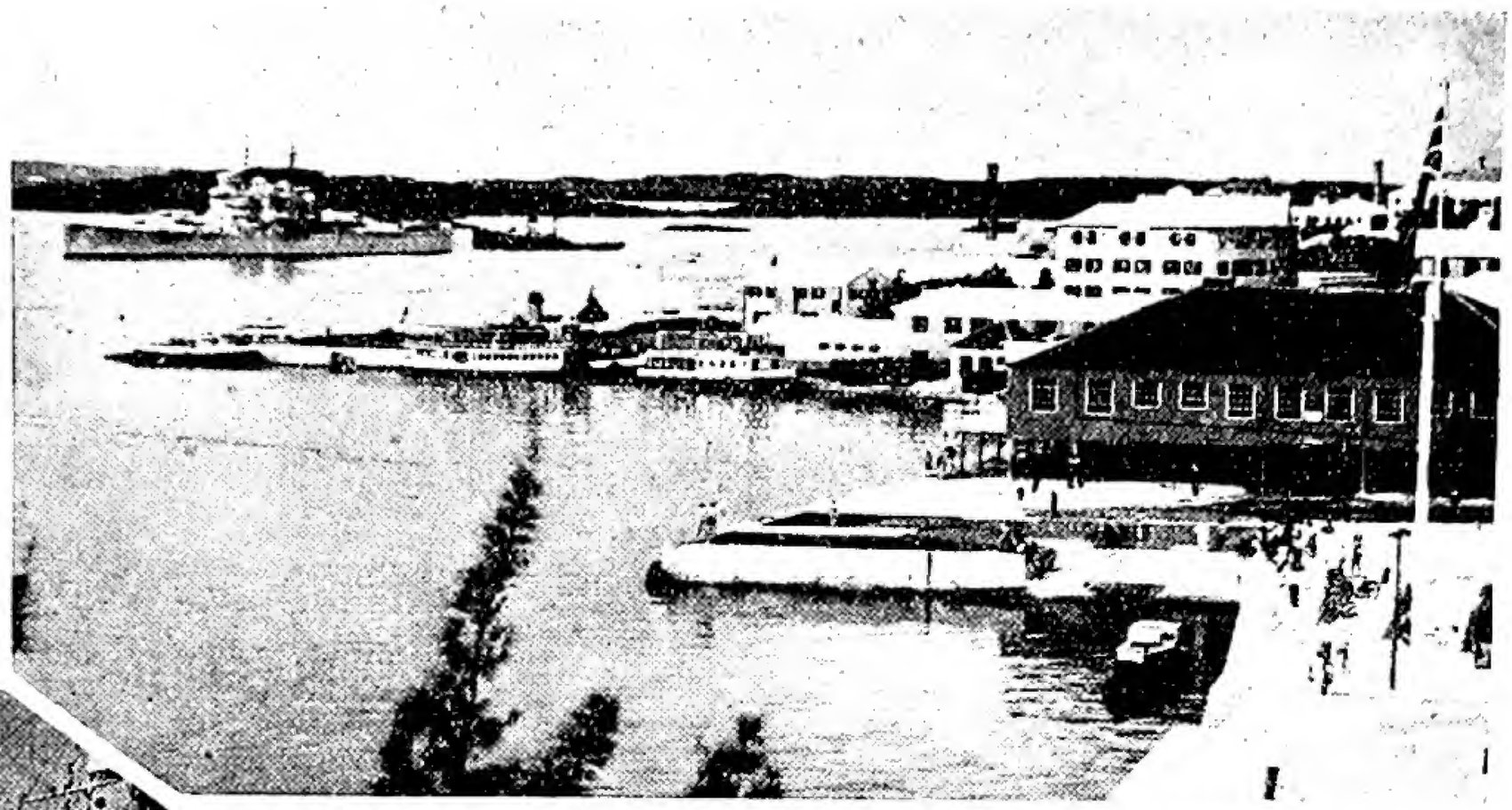
On September 3, in a special message to Congress, President Roosevelt called the Anglo-American Naval Agreement

and the accompanying transfer of destroyers " an epochal and far-reaching act, in preparation for continental defence in the face of grave danger. . . the most important action in reinforcement of our national defence that has been taken since the Louisiana purchase in 1803." The value to the Western Hemisphere of these " outposts of security " was beyond calculation. The need for them had long been recognized; they were essential to the protection of the Panama Canal, Central America, and the northern portion of South America, the Antilles, Canada, Mexico, and the eastern and Gulf of Mexico seaboards of the U.S.A. " Their consequent importance in hemispheric defence is obvious, and for these reasons I have taken advantage of the present opportunity to acquire them."

In due course the United States Board of Inspection, under Rear-Admiral Greenslade, visited the Colonies concerned, and, following consultations with the Governors, agreement was reached on the sites for the leased bases.

The " bases for destroyers " deal was but one indication of America's increased and increasing realization of her inadequate defences in a situation of swiftly-developing peril. Another was







DESTROYERS FOR BRITAIN—BASES FOR AMERICA

The 50 over-age U.S. destroyers acquired by Britain in exchange for the grant of bases to America began to arrive in late September, 1940 (see illus. p. 1225). For years previously they had been laid up at naval bases such as San Diego, Calif. (below left). A month later the U.S. Board of Inspection arrived at Hamilton Bay Harbour, Bermuda, on the cruiser ' St. Louis ' (above) to inspect and survey the site for one of the new bases. Members of the Board also visited Antigua (bottom).

Photos, Wide World; Associated Press

the resolve to construct the two-ocean navy provided for in the $4,000,000,000 Naval Expansion Bill, which received the President's signature on July 1. Under this Act American naval expansion was planned to be such as to provide by 1946–47 a fleet of 35 battleships, 20 aircraft carriers, 88 cruisers, 378 destroyers, and 180 submarines. In June the Naval Department gave orders that work should start at once on two new 45,000-ton battleships, and early in July 50 new warships were ordered, including three aircraft carriers, 13 cruisers, 20 destroyers, and 13 submarines. As a result, the U.S.A. Navy, declared Admiral Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, would become " the greatest fleet the world has ever seen." Besides this vast expansion in ships it was also enacted that the strength of the Naval Air Force should be raised from 10,000 to 15,000 planes. At the same time work was begun on a third set of locks for the Panama Canal.

The Army, too, was reorganized. At the end of June the Secretary of War announced that the United States was to have an armed mechanized force—an armoured corps of two divisions, consisting of more than 18,000 officers and

Photo, Keystone

AMERICA'S ARMY LEARNS FROM THE WAR IN EUROPE

America kept a watchful eye on the technical developments of the war, and the reports of her military observers in Britain eventually reacted on her Army policy to a far-reaching extent. In June, 1940, the formation of an armoured corps of two divisions was announced ; below, scout cars of the first of these, under Major-Gen. Bruce Magruder, are seen on manoeuvres at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Defence against combined air and tank attacks was closely studied, and above is shown cooperative action between anti-tank gun batteries and anti-aircraft guns.



CONSCRIPTION COMES TO THE STATES

After months of controversy the Selective Training Bill, providing for compulsory military service for some 16,500,000 men between 21 and 35, was signed by President Roosevelt on September 16, 1940 (right). Having registered a month later, the first drafts were called up on November 18, and above are some of the recruits from the Chicago area marching to camp on that day.

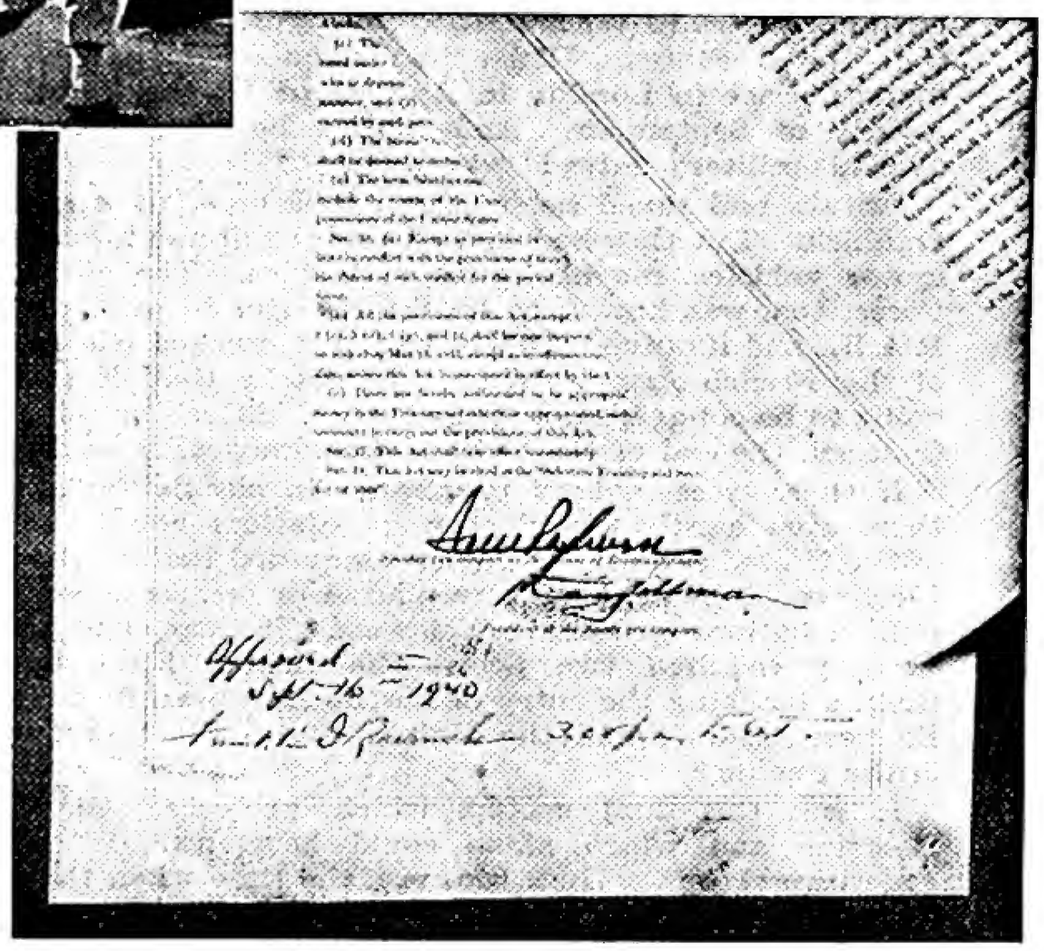
Photo, Wide World

men and equipped with 1,400 tanks—on the lines of Germany's Panzer divisions. This somewhat belated recognition of the vast changes recent months had brought in the art of war was followed by a radical alteration in the method of obtaining America's military man-power.

The Selective Training Bill—the Burke-Wadsworth Bill as it came to be called, since it was introduced on June 20 into the Senate by Senator Burke and into the House of Representatives by Mr. Wadsworth—proposed the registration of all men from 18 to 65, numbering some 40 millions, of whom those between 21 and 45 might be called upon to undergo eight months' compulsory military training, the selection being by lot. This departure from the voluntary system received the whole-hearted support of the military authorities; General Marshall, United States Chief of Staff, for instance, told the Senate Military Affairs Committee on July 12 that the War Department favoured compulsory military training as being the only possible way of immediately bringing the Army up to its full strength. What the United States needed to defend the Western Hemisphere, declared General Marshall a few days later, was a completely trained and equipped army of at least two million men; and the Army was working towards the formation of 45 completely equipped and mechanized infantry divisions and 10 motorized divisions.

Conscription Bill Introduced

But the American public took a lot of convincing before it could be induced to agree to conscription in peacetime. In Congress discussion of the Burke-Wadsworth Bill dragged on for many weeks; opposition in the Senate was particularly marked, led as it was by the Isolationist Senators Wheeler of Montana and Vendenberg of Michigan. Day after day the Isolationists maintained that America was in no real danger, and even if it were it had still to be proved that the voluntary system was not adequate. To encourage Congressmen to make up their minds, President Roosevelt declared at the beginning of August that he was definitely in favour of the Selective Training Bill, considering it indeed essential to adequate national defence; conscription was the most fair and effective means of obtaining the man-power required, and, though during the last war the United States had been able to build up an army of four million men after the declaration of hostilities, such an opportunity would never occur again; that situation, he averred, had been sheer luck. Still the debate dragged on, and the President made another plea for a speedy decision on August 23. So prolonged and time-killing was the discussion in the Senate that a newly elected Senator, Mr. Gibson of Vermont, demanded of his colleagues whether they realized that during the same length of time it had taken to debate the Bill Hitler was able to conquer France. "We act as if the war in Europe was a spectacle produced in Hollywood rather than the most hideous reality in the history of the world. In our very indecision lies the Dictators' most formidable ally. While we debate the sands in the hour-glass are running low." On August 28 the Senate amended the Bill so that the service of conscripts should be restricted to the Western Hemisphere and American possessions, including the Philippines, and limited the number of conscripts who could be under training at any one time to 900,000. Finally, the Bill was passed by the Senate on



August 28 and by the House of Representatives on September 7. After it had been considered by the two houses together, the Bill was signed by the President on September 16. In its final form it applied to all men between 21 and 35—about 16,500,000 in all, although many millions, it was stated, would have to be exempted because they were workers in essential industries and agricultural occupations, were men with dependants, or on other grounds.

Compulsory Military Training

All male United States citizens between the ages specified, and all aliens who had declared their intention of becoming United States citizens, without any discrimination on grounds of race or colour, were required to register on October 16. Registration took place at 125,000 local registration offices throughout the country, and the total number registering was nearly 17 millions. On October 29 lots were drawn at Washington to determine the order in which the first 800,000 men who had registered should be called up for training. The ceremony was inaugurated by Mr. Roosevelt, who said that the men

Historic Documents. CCII

LORD LOTHIAN'S LAST MESSAGE TO AMERICA

Great Britain's Ambassador to the United States was prevented by illness, which was to prove fatal, from personally delivering this powerful address to the American people on December 11, 1940. So moving was the appeal and so widespread its influence that we reproduce the speech here almost in its entirety.

IT is now nearly five months since I made a public speech in the United States . . . In these last five months there have been tremendous changes. When I last spoke we had just experienced a terrific shock—the overthrow of France. If you recall those dismal days you will remember there was something like despair among many diplomatic and business circles in Washington, New York and other cities of the United States. Hitler had announced that he would dictate peace in London in August, or, at the latest, in the middle of September. And hadn't he always been right over his military dates?

Britain had saved her soldiers, it is true, by a miracle at Dunkirk. But they had lost all their equipment, guns, tanks, motor vehicles, machine-guns and rifles. The German Air Force, too, was known to be far superior in numbers to the R.A.F., and its dive-bombers had just crushed the resistance of the French Army. Wasn't it certain that England was going to be conquered, and that, with Hitler's crossing of the Channel, the end of the British Commonwealth would come?

If there were gloomy prophecies in circulation about us, there were hardly less gloomy speculations about the future of the United States. If Hitler conquered Britain the British Fleet would be sunk or surrendered or scattered among the British nations overseas. Yet wasn't it clear that American security required two fleets—the British Fleet based on Britain blocking the entry of hostile European fleets into the Eastern Atlantic and the United States Fleet predominant in the Pacific?

It was this dual system which protected the Monroe Doctrine and which alone could keep war distant from American shores. That, too, was the time when the gloomy revelation was made in the Press that the United States was as unprepared for modern war as all the democracies had been. It was said that she had full modern equipment for only 75,000 to 100,000 soldiers, an air force which was very good in quality but terribly small and with no reserves or the organized manufacturing capacity of the nation behind it, and an excellent Navy, but a one-ocean Navy facing the possibility of a two-ocean war.

U.S. Vulnerable from Two Oceans

THE prospect, therefore, before the United States if the British Fleet was sunk or surrendered or sailed away to outer parts of the British Empire was not rosy. With Hitler's and Mussolini's navies and the remains of the French Fleet based on the eastern rim of the Atlantic and on strategic islands well out in the Atlantic, Iceland and on the Faroes, Azores and Teneriffe, would not the whole American Fleet have to come back to the Atlantic, leaving the Pacific, both North and South, at the mercy of Japan?

If Gibraltar and West African ports fell into Axis hands, how could the United States defend the Monroe Doctrine, especially if some thousands of 'planes were assembled at Dakar, with Fifth Columns in the Americas elated and arrogant at the downfall of Britain?

Finally, what would happen to the rearmament programme of the United States if Hitler and his allies, with Britain conquered, in possession of nearly all the strategic positions and industrial resources of the globe, were able to build three battleships or tanks or aeroplanes for one against the United States?

Those June and July days were indeed gloomy days for us and for you. But that grim picture has been dispelled, at any rate for the present, by the action of the people of a small island in the North Sea, nobly and valiantly aided by the young nations of the British family across the seas.

First there was the retreat from Dunkirk—not an operation likely in itself to bring victory but certainly a testimony to the undiminished toughness and fighting capacity of British soldiers and sailors. Then came Mr. Winston Churchill, with almost the whole of the rest of the world on the run, standing undaunted in the breach, defying in matchless oratory the apparently irresistible power and prestige of Hitler and National Socialism, and inviting his fellow-countrymen not to appeasement or to retreat but to resistance at the price of blood, suffering, sweat and tears.

Then came reports from your own air attachés that the R.A.F. had taken the measure of the German air force despite its superiority in numbers and was on the high road to establishing its supremacy over the British Isles. Then followed the great air battles of August and September in which the Germans lost nearly 200 machines in a day and five or six to one in pilots.

Then came the brutal bombing of London, and especially East London, by night. Few people realize what an inferno that was. The first attack set great fires alight so that hour after hour and night after night the German bombers could return the short distance to their bases in France to collect fresh cargoes of destruction to unload on the stricken people in Dockland.

Britain Wins the Second Round

BUT there was no flinching before Hitler's attempted intimidation, no crying for peace, no suggestion that, though we were almost alone, we had had enough. Simple victims, blown from hearth and home, declared they would stick it if only others did and it led to victory. . . . And, finally, has come the gradual petering out of the much-heralded invasion of Britain.

Thus, if Hitler won the first round of the great battle which began in Norway in April, we have won the second; for without the conquest of Britain Hitler cannot win the war. But do not think that Hitler's Nazidom is going to be easily overthrown. Hitler is certainly going to make another attempt next year—and earlier rather than later—to beat down our resistance by new methods of still greater violence and to open the way to world war and domination by the Nazis. . . .

This time he is going to concentrate on the sea. He has failed to overwhelm us in the air, and we are sure he will continue to fail, while with your help our power to hit back with our bombers will steadily increase. But he is building submarines and long-distance 'planes with all his might and main with which to bomb convoys and announce their location to submarines.

He will base them on all ports and aerodromes along that line which runs like a vast semicircle round Britain from Narvik, down the northern and western coasts of France to Spain. He will have two new 35,000-ton battleships, "Tirpitz" and "Bismarck," and other vessels in the North Sea early next year. With these he will try to deliver a knock-out blow at our communications so as to prevent us getting the food, raw materials and aeroplanes necessary to enable us to continue the war at full strength. Today, since the disappearance of the powerful French Navy, we are fighting alone. Our Navy, therefore, with the tremendous tasks which rest on it, none of which it has shirked or evaded, is strung out terribly thin.

WE think this is a situation which concerns you almost as much as it concerns us. It has long been clear that your security, no less than ours, depends upon our holding the Atlantic impregnable and you the Pacific. So long as this is so the way of life to which we are attached can continue, and our free economic system can resist totalitarian attack. But if one of these two navies fails and the unity of the British Commonwealth begins to disappear, the control of trade routes begins to pass to Axis powers, and those controlling bastions of sea-power which now keep war away from

'THE ISSUE NOW DEPENDS LARGELY ON YOU'

America become the jumping-off points from which it can be menaced.

Moreover, the Axis-Japanese Pact of September last makes nakedly clear the ultimate objective of totalitarian strategy. As soon as the Italian or German army or fleet can occupy Gibraltar or North-West Africa, or Great Britain's control of the Atlantic has been sufficiently weakened to cause doubt as to where the American Fleet should be stationed, a two-ocean attack on us both in the Atlantic and Pacific will be simultaneously launched. The more secure our control of the Atlantic, the less likely is the outbreak of a two-ocean war.

We have both, therefore, a vital interest in decisively defeating the now rapidly maturing naval attack on British communications. It is the best way of preventing a spread of the war, and an essential step towards that victory which will eventually follow the failure of Hitler to destroy Great Britain, both in the air and on the sea, is the uninterrupted flow of American munitions to the British Isles.

We have no illusions, therefore, about 1941. It is going to be a hard, dangerous year. Our shipping losses have recently been formidable. In one week British, Allied and neutral losses were nearly 200,000 tons. . . . We are suffering on an average for October 200 civilian deaths and 300 civilians mutilated every night by enemy bombardment, and our food supplies are gradually being more strictly rationed. But we aren't in the least dismayed. With help from you we are confident that we can win, and win decisively, by 1942, if not before.

Moral Rottenness of Hitler's Creed

WE are confident, first of all, for spiritual reasons. The core of Hitlerism is moral rottenness and the belief that the use of utter brutality, ruthless power and the prosecution of domination is the road to greatness both in individuals and in nations. Hitlerism is a tragedy in Germany. Its doctrine is not true. All history proves it wrong. The Sermon on the Mount is in the long run much stronger than all Hitler's propaganda or Goering's guns and bombs. The core of the Allied creed, for all our mistakes of omission and commission, is liberty, justice and truth, and that, we believe, will infallibly prevail if we have resolution and the courage to resist to the end.

But on the side of armaments also we have great growing assets. The curve of our munition and aeroplane production is steadily rising—despite bombing. The number of our divisions, of our aeroplanes and our pilots is also steadily going up. What is more, the important young nations of the Commonwealth, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand, are fast getting into their stride. The number of their divisions is increasing. . . . Indian troops and Indian munitions are now coming into the battle fronts, and ever-increasing resources are coming from colonies and territories loyal to a man and proud of their membership of the Commonwealth.

The whole of this growing aggregation of power is now being mobilized. Its first task is to defend that great ring of defensive positions which lie around you—Britain itself, Gibraltar, Cape Town, Egypt, the Suez Canal, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand. As long as we can hold these positions we and the democratic world beyond them are safe.

Our second task is to enable us to deliver increasingly formidable blows at Germany itself and at her allies, one of whom is already beginning to crack, and to bring assistance to the subjugated peoples who are now once more beginning to show signs of resistance to Hitler's will. But that result is not yet secure. It will be put to the test in 1941. If we can stave off the attack on Britain, if we can outlast next year still holding all the positions I have mentioned, Hitlerism in the end must go down. By ourselves we cannot be sure of this result—though we will try our best. Not only is there the situation in the North Atlantic which I have described, but no one can yet tell where constant pressure by Hitler, both on the Vichy Government to give him control of the French Fleet and bases in the Mediterranean, and on Japan to extend the war in the Pacific, may lead to; but with your help in aeroplanes, munitions and ships, and on the sea and in the field of finance now being discussed between your Treasury and ours, we are sure of victory.

You have already declared your interest, your sure interest, in the survival of Britain. It is for you to decide whether it is to your interest to give us whatever assistance may be necessary to make certain that Britain shall not fall.

No War on American Soil

THERE are only two more things I want to say in conclusion. The first is that nobody who, like myself, has seen what the steady and constant bombardment of great cities from the air means could wish any friendly country like the United States of America to undergo any similar experience. Hitler has let loose this kind of warfare on mankind, and he will have to take the consequences. We, for geographical reasons, are in the firing line. But you, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and, probably, South Africa, have the chance, if you take it, of saving yourselves from being the theatre of total war. You are the centre of that great ring of fortresses—Britain, Gibraltar, Cape Town, Suez, Singapore and Australia—which I have mentioned and to which I should add Hawaii and Panama. So long as these fortresses stand, war, with its aerial bombardment, cannot in any real sense of the word roll up to your shores or devastate your towns and cities. . . .

The last thing I want to say concerns the future. There were two things which I found the ordinary citizen of Britain thinking about. The first was that all his and her suffering and sacrifice should, if possible, end not all wars, for human nature is probably not yet ready for that, but the kind of total war Hitler is waging, with its hideous mutilation and destruction from the air, its brutal persecution of conquered peoples. The second was that after this war no one who had done his duty should be thrown on the scrap-heap of unemployment, with nothing but bonus or dole. Somehow or other employment must be found for everybody.

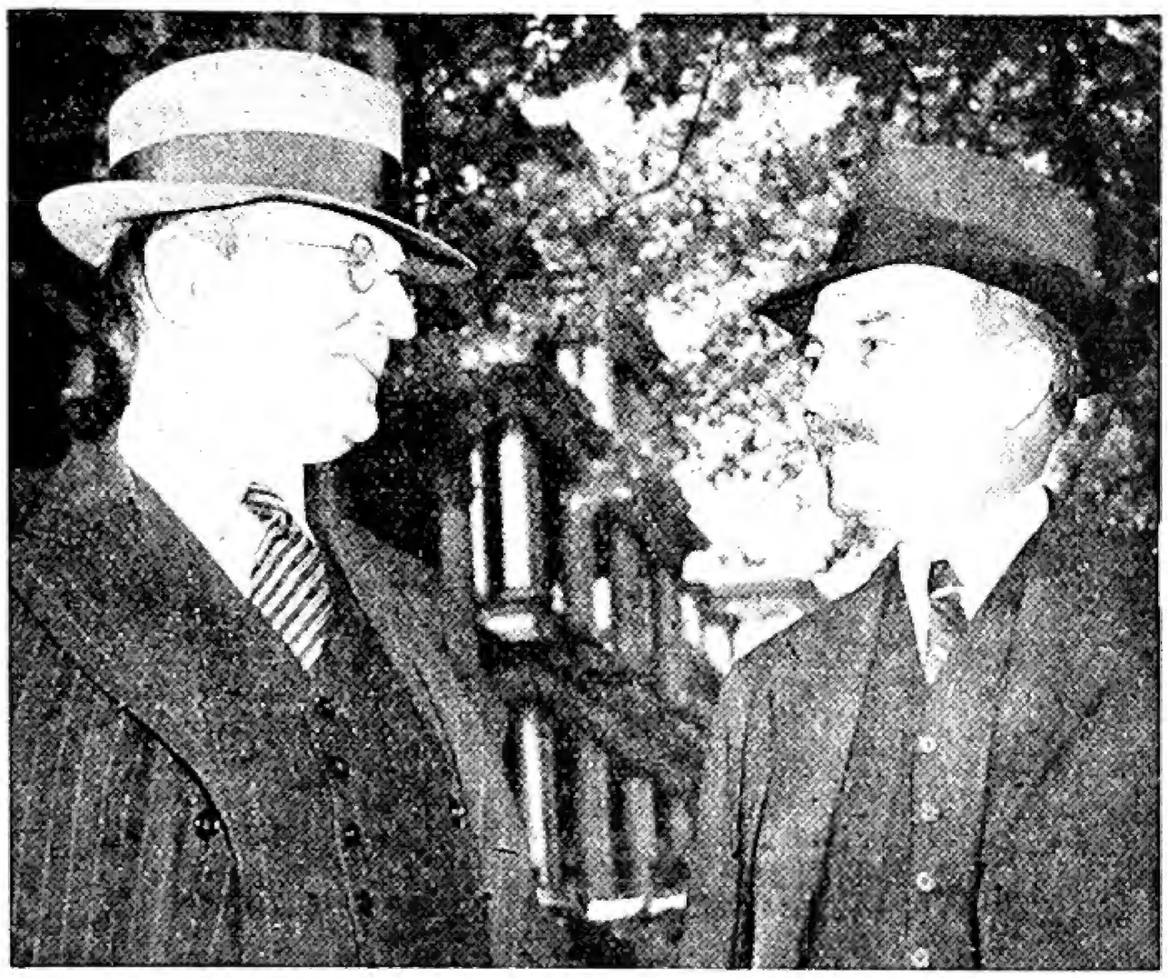
Some people are spreading a legend that democracy is disappearing from Britain and that she will come out at the end of the war a Fascist or Communist State. Nothing could be farther from the truth. I have never known Britain more truly democratic. The British are not going to change their essential character. It has shown itself in this war. They will move forward, of course, with the times, but without revolutionary violence.

But the more people think about the future the more they are drawn to the conclusion that all real hope depends on some form of cooperation between the United States and the British Commonwealth of Nations. Even if we win total victory there will be no change immediately creating an effective new League of Nations. There will be nothing in Europe from which to make it. A majority of the younger generation consists of people who have been educated in such brutish doctrines as blood and earth, that might is right, that Jews are social poison or that business men are hyenas only fit for destruction. No man can even say what France tomorrow will be like.

Peace Depends on Power of Democracies

THE plain truth is that peace and order always depend not on disarming police, but on there being an overwhelming power behind just law. The only place where that power can be found behind the laws of the liberal and democratic world is the United States and Great Britain, supported by the Dominions and some other free nations. The only nucleus round which a stable, peaceful, democratic world can be built after this war is if the United States and Great Britain possess between them more aeroplanes, ships of war, and key positions of world power such as I have described than any possible totalitarian rival. Then, and then only, will political and industrial freedom be secure and will it be possible for a free economic system to prevail against the economics of totalitarianism. . . .

The issue now depends largely on what you decide to do. Nobody can share that responsibility with you. It is the great strength of democracy that it brings responsibility down squarely on every citizen and every nation. And before the Judgement Seat of God each must answer for his own actions.



BRITAIN LOSES A DISTINGUISHED AMBASSADOR
At a time when cooperation between Britain and the United States was becoming closer and more fruitful, Lord Lothian carried out his duties as ambassador with exemplary tact and foresight. His remarkable address to the American people late in 1940 was, unfortunately, followed by his untimely death on December 12. He is here seen (left) at Washington with the Count de Saint Quentin, French Ambassador.
Photo, Associated Press

were being enrolled "for one purpose only—the task of keeping peace in the New World"; and Mr. Stimson, Secretary of War, announced that the first 30,000 would be called up on November 18 and the last 200,000 on June 15, 1941.

Immediately following the passing of the Burke-Wadsworth Bill Congress approved the Appropriation Bill, providing nearly $1,500,000,000 for the training of the conscripts and the building up of the Army to 1,400,000 men. But it was now coming to be realized that America's problem was not man-power, supplies of which are almost inexhaustible, but munitions of war. On the production front there seemed to be little realization of the need for speed and increased energy, if not only America's own needs were to be supplied but those of Britain and her allies.

Some part at least of the widely prevailing apathy was due to political causes. The Isolationists were still loud in their denunciations of the President and the "war-makers," in their insistence that never again should the sons of American mothers be sent abroad to die on a foreign field in a foreign quarrel. The Isolationists were represented in both parties in Congress, but for the most part their strength was drawn from the Republicans. Nevertheless, opposition to the new defence measures was not organized on strictly party lines.

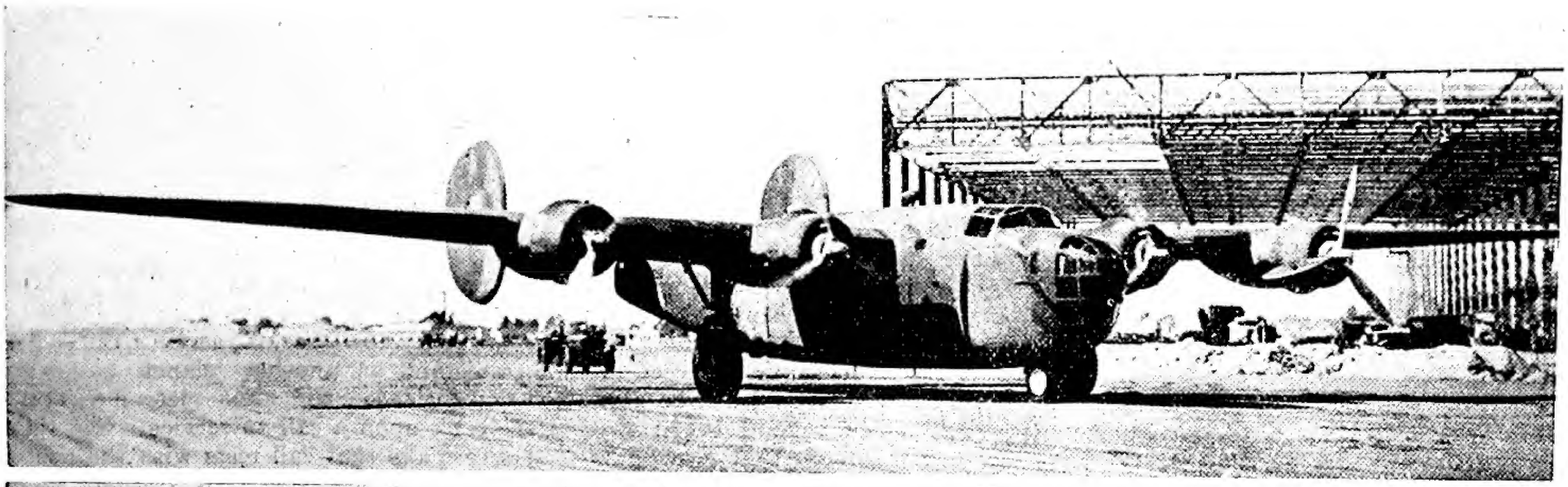
Most prominent of the Isolationists outside the walls of Congress was Colonel Lindbergh, who was never tired of asserting that the country was courting disaster by its "warlike intervention" in the European struggle, since it was not in a position even to defend itself properly. He denounced compulsory military service as being a departure from the American tradition. To which Senator Key Pittman rejoined that the Colonel should cease his efforts to create "unfounded war fear and lack of confidence in the Government." "It appears," went on Mr. Pittman, "that Colonel Lindbergh, who has resided long in Great Britain as its guest, from fear of incensing Hitler would deprive the people of Britain and France of the weapons necessary to protect their lives against airplanes and tanks." Forthright criticism of Lindbergh and his fellow Isolationists came from many other quarters. The principal members of the Administration—Mr. Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, and the new Secretaries of War and the Navy, Mr. H. L. Stimson and Colonel Knox, Republicans both—were as strong in their condemnation of Nazism as they were in support of the Democracies. American Labour, too—both the American Federation of Labour, presided over by William Green, and its bitter rival, the Committee for Industrial Organization, led by John L. Lewis—were at one in their determination to cooperate to the utmost in the fulfilment of the defence programme, and so contribute to a free and secure democracy. Yet another critic of the Isolationists was the veteran General Pershing, Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Force in the First Great War.

Call for Aid to Britain

As the Battle of Britain rose to its height American enthusiasm for the Allied cause rose with it. On every hand there were signs of increasing impatience with the Isolationists; on every hand there were demands that America should go all out in support of hard-pressed Britain. And the demand was answered—at least, in considerable measure. The American naval dockyards were made available to British warships for repairs. The output of tommy-guns was earmarked for the British Army. The supply of 'planes and guns, tanks, and all the paraphernalia of war was speeded up so that Britain might have a substantial share. Red Cross funds were generously supported, and British children evacuated from



FOR AND AGAINST ISOLATION
Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh, here seen (left) testifying against the Lease-Lend Bill in January, 1941, was among the most outspoken of America's Isolationists, sparing no rhetorical effort to save his country from 'warlike intervention' in Europe. His attitude provoked much vigorous and acid criticism in which Senator Key Pittman of Nevada (right), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, figured prominently.
Photos, Wide World; Associated Press





AMERICA MAKES BOMBERS FOR THE R.A.F.

Lockheed Hudson twin-engined bombers were among the earliest American-built aircraft to operate with the R.A.F., their activities with Coastal Command gaining them a high reputation. Here are employees of the Lockheed and Vega plants in California giving a send-off to one of these machines which they themselves raised the money to buy as a gift to Britain. Top, a Consolidated Aircraft Corporation B-24 four-engined bomber after a test flight at San Diego. This huge plane, known here as the 'Liberator,' went into service with the R.A.F. in 1941.

Photos, Planet News

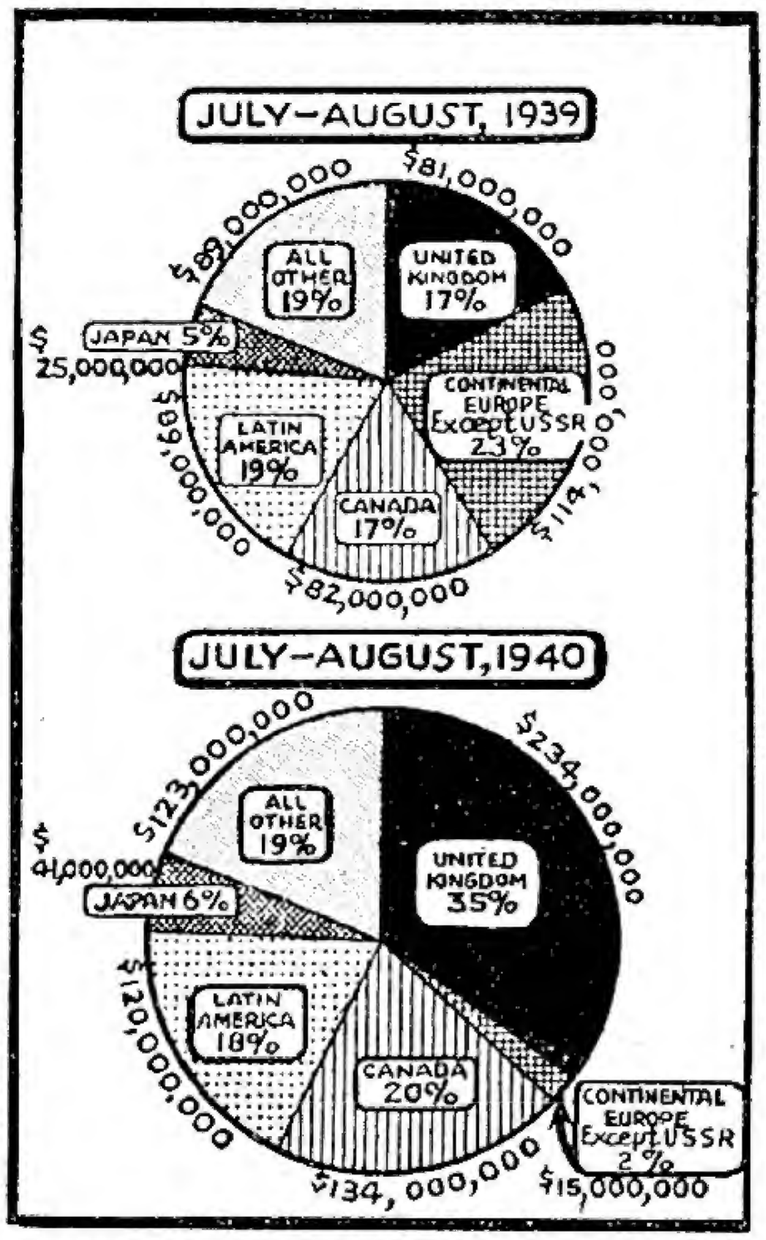
danger zones were freely welcomed in American homes.

This aid for Britain and the Allies went hand in hand with an increasing realization of the dangers arising from a potential Fifth Column in America itself. In June the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under Mr. Edgar Hoover, conducted a nation-wide inquiry into the activities of suspected fifth columnists and other subversive elements. In August Mr. Hoover declared that his bureau had discovered many acts of sabotage directed against the national defence programme and arms production, and the President found it necessary to issue a call to the Federal and State Law enforcement agents to tackle the "subversive activities, seditious acts, and those things that slow up or break down our common defence programme."

At the same time a Committee of the House of Representatives, under the chairmanship of Mr. Martin Dies, was busy investigating un-American activities. On August 26 Mr. Dies disclosed that Germany and Italy had been endeavouring to obstruct the national defence preparations and prevent any help being given to Britain; in particular, he accused them of having placed agents in American munition works and aircraft factories to hinder production. In many American cities, moreover, a number of German and Italian agents were carrying on an extensive Fascist propaganda.

Even the Presidential campaign was overshadowed by the threat of war and

the knowledge of America's unpreparedness. First in the field was the Republican candidate, Mr. Wendell Lewis Willkie, who was nominated at the Republican Convention held at Philadelphia on June 28. Young (he was 48), a vigorous speaker, and with an attractive personality, Mr. Willkie made



COMPENSATION FOR AMERICA

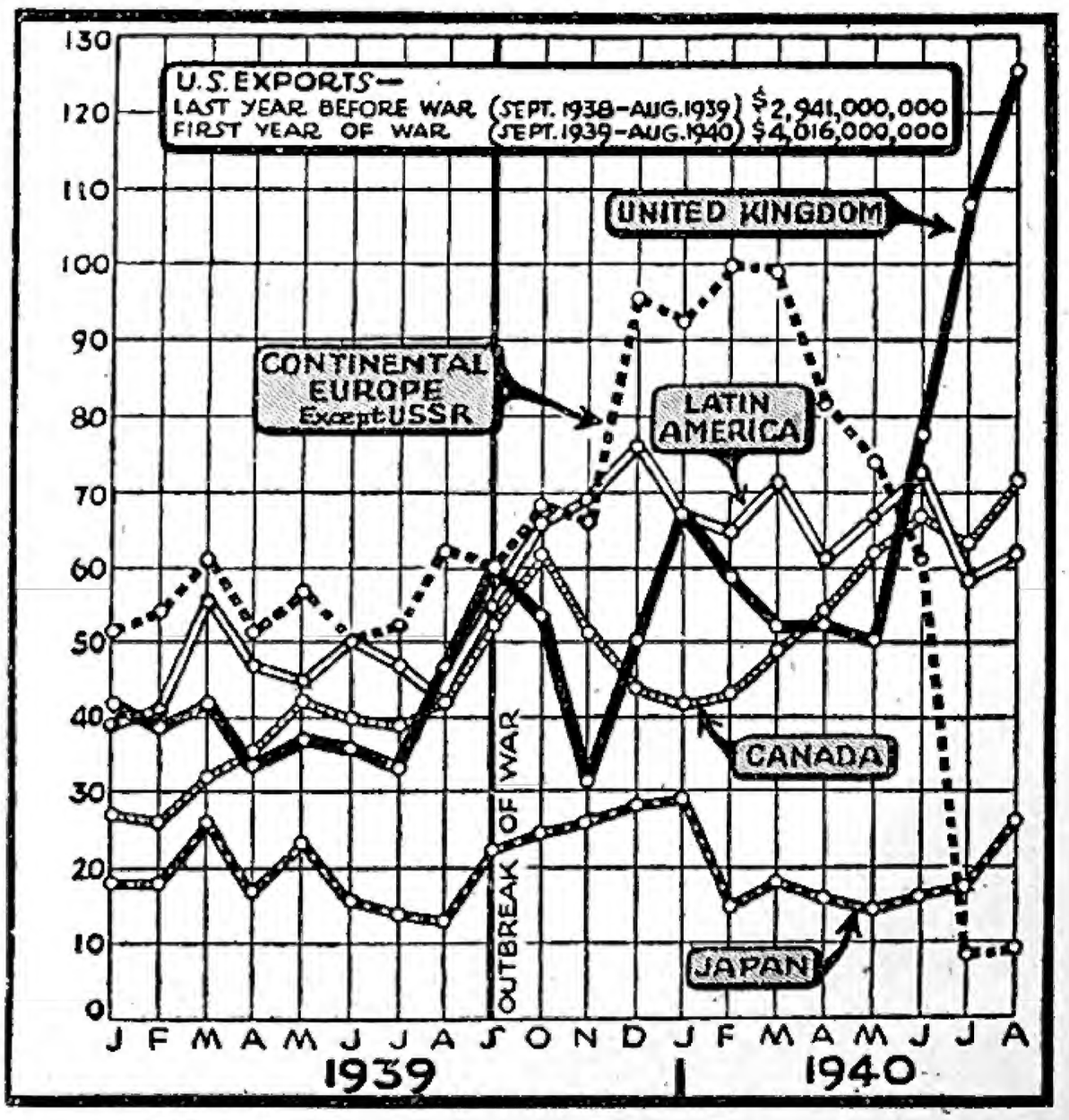
After the collapse of the Low Countries and France in May and June, 1940, U.S. exports to Continental Europe declined abruptly. No less spectacular, however, was the sudden enormous increase at this time in material sent to Britain, as the accompanying graph and diagram strikingly show. A notable example is given by aircraft shipments, which in the first five months of 1940 were only 104, but in August alone jumped to 278.

Courtesy of the "New York Times"

a very strong appeal, and the business community in particular welcomed the opportunity of voting for one who was president of one of America's largest utilities holding companies—the Southern and Commonwealth Corporation. Moreover, he was a former Democrat, and had left his party because of his opposition to the Roosevelt New Deal. Yet he was no Isolationist; indeed, as the campaign proceeded he was to be as forthright in his denunciation of Nazism, as whole-hearted in his support of Britain and all that Britain was fighting for, as the President himself. True, the Republican platform contained a plank, "No involvement in a foreign war"; but other planks demanded "an Army and Navy so strong that no unfriendly power can successfully attack America or its essential outposts," and support for "all oppressed peoples everywhere who are struggling to obtain or maintain their homes and liberties."

Another decision adopted by the Republicans was "complete and irrevocable opposition to third terms for all American presidents." This had reference to the suggestion that Mr. Roosevelt might venture to challenge that unwritten law of the American Constitution which declares that no President can hold the supreme office for more than two terms. Elected in 1933, Mr. Roosevelt should not be permitted to hold office beyond 1941: that was the argument of the Republicans, and also of a considerable section of his own Democrat Party.

But when the Democrat National Convention met at Chicago in July to nominate their candidate, it was found that some 90 per cent of the 1,094 delegates had been instructed by their state electorates to vote for the re-



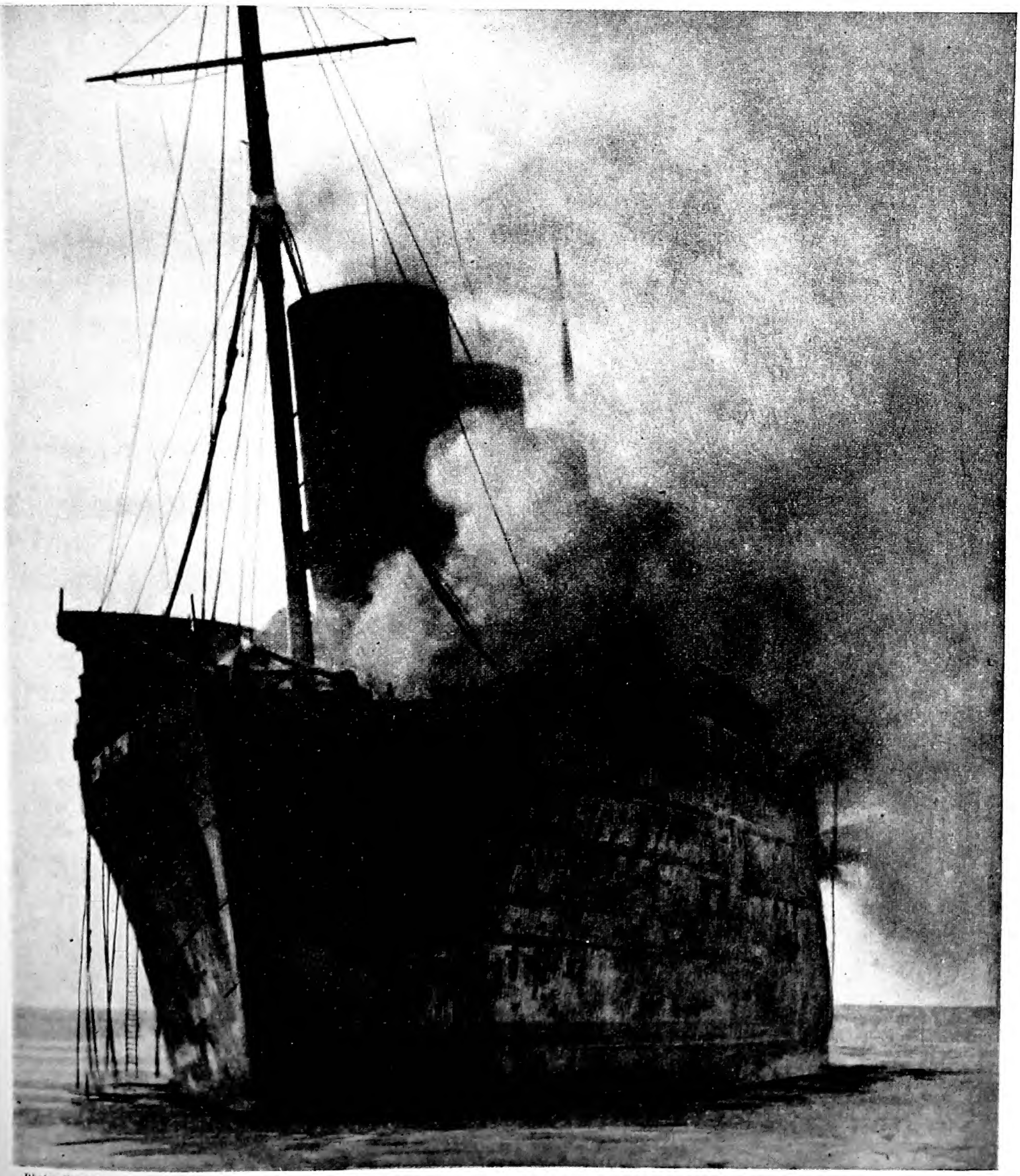
nomination of the President. On July 16 Mr. Roosevelt issued a statement declaring that he did not desire nomination, was not seeking re-election, and that delegates were free to vote for any candidate they chose; but the delegates were determined to have Roosevelt, and on July 18 he was nominated for a third term amidst scenes of tremendous enthusiasm. In the event nearly 950 delegates voted for him; but it was only after long debate that they accepted Mr. Roosevelt's choice of Mr. H. A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture, as candidate for the Vice-Presidency.

His acceptance of the nomination was signified by the President in a radio speech to the Convention on July 18. "Like most men of my age," he said in a revealing passage, "I had made plans for a private life of my own choice and for my own satisfaction—a life of that kind to begin in January, 1941.

Roosevelt's Third Term

"These plans, like so many other plans, have been made in a world which now seems as distant as another planet . . . my conscience will not let me stand back upon a call to service. The right to make that call rests with the people through the American methods of a free election; only the people themselves can draft a President. If such a draft should be made upon me, I say to you with the utmost simplicity, I will, with God's help, continue to serve to the best of my ability and with the fullness of my strength." (*See* p. 1445.)

Like the Republicans, the Democrats expressed their resolve to increase America's defence: "We must be so strong that no possible combination of powers would dare to attack us. We propose to provide America with an invincible air force, a Navy strong enough to protect all our sea coasts and our national interests, and a thoroughly equipped and mechanized Army." Then, in the field of foreign policy, "the American people determine that war raging in Europe, Asia and Africa shall not come to America. We will not participate in foreign wars, and we will not send our Army, Navy, or Air Force to fight in foreign lands outside the Americas, except in case of attack." But "the world's greatest democracy cannot afford heartlessly or in a spirit of appeasement to ignore the peace-loving and liberty-loving peoples, wantonly attacked by ruthless aggressors. So (the platform continued) we pledge to extend to those peoples all the material aid at our command, consistent with law, and not inconsistent with the



Photo, Keystone

A MAJOR TRAGEDY OF THE NAZI WAR ON SHIPPING

Though only 45 out of 643 lost their lives by the bombing and torpedoing of the 'Empress of Britain,' (see photos in page 1409), her destruction was a heavy blow. Launched in 1930, she was one of the fastest liners flying the British flag. Bombed and set on fire in the early morning of October 25, most of her passengers and crew were safely taken off. While under tow, during the night of October 27–28, she was torpedoed and sank.



Photo, Wide World

AIRCRAFT CARRIERS PROMINENT IN U.S. NAVAL EXPANSION

Among the provisions of the Naval Expansion Bill of 1940 was the increase of America's fleet of aircraft carriers to the ambitious total of twenty vessels. Six were already in commission ('Lexington' and 'Saratoga,' 1927; 'Ranger,' 1934; 'Enterprise,' 'Yorktown' and 'Wasp,' 1938); and a seventh—the 'Hornet'—is here seen being launched at Newport News, Virginia, in December, 1940. With a displacement of 20,000 tons, this ship was designed to carry 83 fighter aircraft, and was constructed at a cost of 31,000,000 dollars exclusive of armament.



Associated Press

DR. FRANK, GOVERNOR-GENERAL, TAKES THE SALUTE AT CRACOW

The Nazis divided Poland into two main territories—the Reichsgebiet, containing provinces incorporated into the Reich ; and the Government-General, which was supposed to have some measure of autonomy. But under Dr. Walther Frank, the German Governor (here seen at the commemoration of the first anniversary of the Government-General, on October 26, 1940), it was soon clear that only grievous persecution was to be the lot of the unhappy Poles, whom Frank stigmatized as belonging to an inferior and permanently subject race. (See also page 1453.)

NEW YORK'S AMAZING WELCOME TO ITS THRICE-ELECTED PRESIDENT

Photo, Planet News

On December 11, 1940, Mr. Roosevelt was re-elected President, being the first holder of that high office to be thus elected for a third term. His leading opponent, Mr. Wendell Willkie, polled the highest vote ever recorded for a Republican candidate—22,327,226 against Roosevelt's 27,241,939. There was hard hitting on both sides during the electoral campaign, but Mr. Willkie had no illusions about the menace of Hitlerism. In a speech in August the Republican leader had declared his promise to 'outdistance Hitler in any contest he chooses in 1940 or after'



RUNNER-UP IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Mr. Wendell Lewis Willkie was 48 when in June, 1940, he was nominated for President at the Republican Convention. A former Democrat, he had turned over because of opposition to the New Deal. He polled the remarkable total of 22,327,226 votes.

interests of our own national self-defence, all to the end that peace and international good faith may still emerge triumphant."

For weeks and months the campaign continued. For the first time Mr. Roosevelt was opposed by a candidate of something approaching his own calibre. There was hard-hitting on both sides. Willkie minced no words in his attacks on the New Deal, and assailed the President for attempting what Washington and Jefferson, Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson had never dared to attempt. He accused the President of dabbling in "inflammatory statements" and "manufactured panics," of courting a war for which the country was hopelessly unprepared and which it emphatically did not want, of secretly meddling in the affairs of Europe and unscrupulously encouraging other countries to hope for more help than America was able to give. Yet in the same speech—the speech with which he opened his election campaign at Elwood, Indiana, on August 17—Mr. Willkie told his audience that "we must face a brutal, perhaps a terrible, fact. Our way of life is in competition with Hitler's way of life. I can promise to outdistance Hitler in any contest he chooses in 1940 or after."

Willkie—Republican Leader

These charges were indignantly repudiated by the President. At Philadelphia on October 23 he complained that to tell the public that he wished to lead the United States into war was wilful misrepresentation: "It is for peace that I shall labour all the days of my life." There was no truth in the accusation that his Government had secretly entered into agreements with foreign nations. "I give you this most solemn assurance that there is no secret treaty, no secret obligation, no secret commitment, no secret understanding in any shape or form, direct or indirect, with any other government, any other nation, in any part of the world, to involve this nation in war or for any other purpose." A few days later the President answered the criticism that he had been slow in rearming America. "I now brand as false," he declared in his speech at Madison Square Gardens, New York, on October 28, "the statement being made by the Republican campaign orators day after day and night after night, that the rearming of America was slow, that it is hamstrung and impeded, and that it will never be able to meet threats from abroad."

Polling took place on November 5, the candidates being not only Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Willkie, but Norman Thomas (Socialist), Earl Browder (Communist), John W. Aitken (Socialist Labour), Roger Babson (Prohibitionist) and John Zahnd ("National Greenback," advocating a large increase in paper currency). But the five latter candidates polled only a few votes, and the election, one of the liveliest and most strongly contested in American history, resulted in the triumph of Mr. Roosevelt. Of the 48 states in the American Union he won 39 as against Mr. Willkie's nine, thereby securing 468 votes in the electoral college as against Mr. Willkie's 63. The figures of the vote were:

Roosevelt (Democrat)	27,241,939
Willkie (Republican)	22,327,226
Democrat majority	4,914,713

If Mr. Roosevelt made history by being the first American President to be elected for a third term, Mr. Willkie had also the satisfaction of knowing that he had polled the highest vote ever recorded for a Republican candidate. On December 12 the electoral college formally declared Mr. Roosevelt elected for a third term.

So the tumult of the election died away, and once again news of war and preparations for war assumed the first place in the newspapers and in the public mind. When but a few days remained of the old year, the President came once again to the microphone.



AMERICAN ARMS FOR BRITAIN'S HOME GUARD

In view of the loss of British arms as a result of the evacuation from France an appeal was made for small arms in the possession of civilians. Also, in the U.S.A. thousands of rifles and revolvers were collected for presentation to Britain. Here R.A.F. men are seen assembling Remington rifles received from America, a special gift from one American donor.

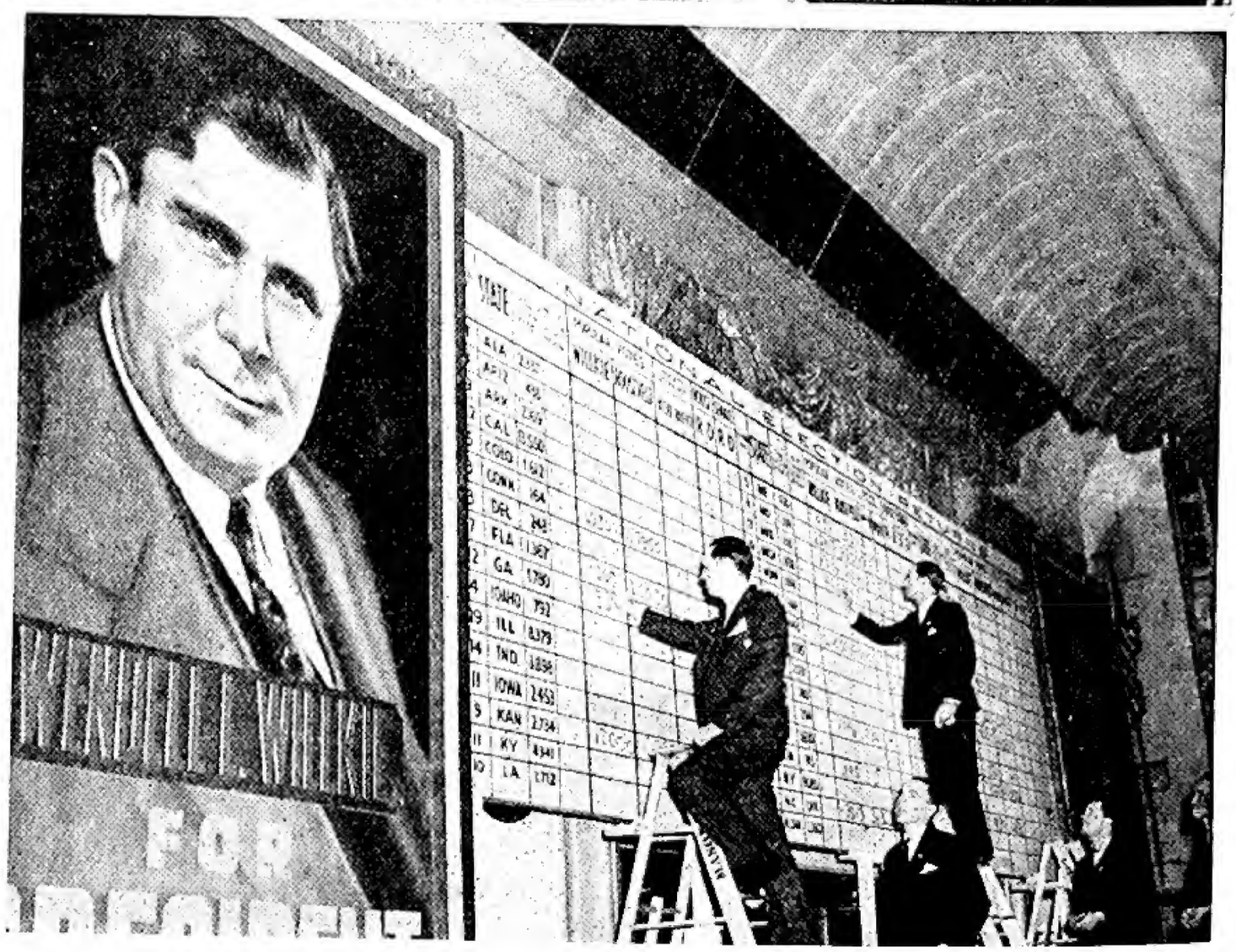
Photo, Ministry of Information



PRESIDENT & VICE-PRESIDENT

Top, President Roosevelt, Mrs. Roosevelt, Mrs. Wallace and the Vice-President elect, Mr. Henry A. Wallace, on arrival at Washington after the election in November, 1940. Below, posting election returns at the Hotel Commodore, New York, in the ball-room reserved for the Republican Party. Note the poster of Mr. Willkie.

Photo, Wide World



His fireside broadcast on December 28 resolved itself into a "talk on national security," because "the sum of the whole purpose of your President is to keep you and your children later and your grandchildren much later out of the last ditch of war for the preservation of American independence and all of the things that American independence means to you and me and ours." In easy-to-understand sentences the President reviewed the history of the last few years. He exposed once again Nazi treachery, revealed once more the Nazi intentions against the security of the Americas. In scathing phrases he denounced the American appeasers. "The experience of the past few years has proved beyond doubt that no nation can appease the Nazis; no man can tame a tiger into a kitten by stroking it." He reviewed the nation's efforts and sacrifices, all devoted to a single-minded purpose—the defence of the United States; bluntly he declared that great as the effort and sacrifice had been, much more would be required in the weeks to come. For, he made it plain, "we must be the great arsenal of democracy."

Then, after expressing his belief that the Axis Powers were not going to win this war, he concluded with a rallying call to his people. As President of the United States he challenged them to make a national effort—"a mightier effort than we have ever yet made to increase our production of all the implements of defence to bring success to our democratic neighbour. I call for it in the name of that nation which we love and honour and which we are privileged and proud to serve. I call upon our people with absolute confidence that our common cause will richly succeed."

DEMOCRACY IN THE BALANCE

Here we reprint extracts from cogent speeches by Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Cordell Hull at a time when America was faced not only with the election of a President, but also with the wider choice between government by her own people or eventual slavery under a world dictatorship.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, IN A BROADCAST ADDRESS TO THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION, JULY 18, 1940:

IN times like these, in times of great tension, the compass of the world narrows to a single fact—the fact which dominates our world is the fact of armed aggression, aimed at the form of government, the kind of society that we in the United States have chosen and established for ourselves. It is a fact which no one any longer doubts, which no one is any longer able to ignore.

It is not an ordinary war. It is a revolution imposed by force of arms which threaten all men everywhere. It is a revolution which proposes, not to set men free but to reduce them to slavery in the interests of dictatorship, which has already shown the nature and the extent of the advantage which it hopes to obtain and which dominates the lives of all of us.

Whatever its new trappings and new slogans, tyranny is the oldest and most discredited rule known to history, and whenever tyranny has replaced a more human form of government it has been due more to internal causes than external. Democracy can thrive only when it is left to the vote of those whom Lincoln called "the common people." Democracy can hold their devotion only when it adequately respects their dignity by so ordering their society to assure to the masses of men and women reasonable security and hope for themselves and for their children. We in our democracy, and those who live in still unconquered democracies, will never willingly descend to any form of this so-called security of efficiency which calls for the abandonment of other securities more vital to the dignity of man. We must live under the liberties which were first heralded by Magna Carta, and placed into operation through the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the Bill of Rights. . . .

MR. CORDELL HULL, U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE, IN AN ADDRESS TO THE PAN-AMERICAN CONFERENCE IN HAVANA, JULY 22, 1940:

THE Americas are endangered by the tragic conflagration which is sweeping through the world, and it would be suicidal not to recognize those dangers and not to prepare to meet them fully and decisively. The war came as a culmination to a process of deterioration in international conduct and morality wherein the forces of ruthless conquest have been gathering strength in several parts of the world. These forces shrink from no means of attaining their ends in their contempt for all moral and ethical values. They are bent on uprooting the very foundation of orderly relations among nations, subverting, undermining, and destroying the existing social and political institutions within nations.

Our nations must not blind themselves into a fatal complacency, as so many nations have done to their mortal sorrow, regarding the possibility of attack from without or externally directed attempt from within to undermine their national strength and subvert their cherished social and political institutions. Lest our nations suffer the fate that has already befallen so many other peace-loving and peace-seeking nations, wisdom and prudence require that we have in our hands adequate means of defence. . . .

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC SPEECH AFTER RE-ELECTION, NOVEMBER 11, 1940:

OVER the last century almost all peoples had acquired some form of popular expression of opinion, some form of election, some form of franchise, some form of the right to be heard. And all of the Americas in that century, and the British Isles with them, England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, led the world in spreading the gospel of democracy among peoples great and small. And the world as a whole felt much grace, for by that time it had discarded feudalism and conquest and dictatorships.

Peoples felt that way within the memory of many of us who are here today. They felt that way in 1914, when a definite effort was made in part of the world to destroy this new order of the ages, to destroy it after its relatively short trial, and to substitute for it the doctrine that might makes right.

I for one do not believe that the era of Democracy in human affairs can or ever will be snuffed out in our lifetime. I for one do not believe that new efforts will be successful in sterilizing the seeds which have taken such firm root as a harbinger of better lives for mankind. I for one do not believe that the world will revert either to a modern form of ancient slavery, or to the control vested in modern feudalism or modern emperors or modern dictators or modern oligarchs in these days. I for one do believe that the very people under their iron heel will themselves rebel.

After all, what are a few months, or even a few years, in the lifetime of any of us? Those alive today, not in the existing democracies alone, but also among the populations of the smaller nations already overrun, are thinking in the larger terms of the new order to which we have been accustomed and which we intend to continue.

Time has marched on. We recognize certain facts of 1940 which did not exist in 1918—a need for the elimination of aggressive armaments; a need for the breakdown of barriers in a more closely knitted world; a need for restoring honour in the written and spoken word. We recognize that the processes of democracy must be greatly improved so that we may attain those purposes. The young men of 1917 and 1918 helped to preserve those truths of democracy for our generation. We still unite, we still strive mightily to preserve intact that new order of the ages founded by the fathers of America.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, IN A BROADCAST ADDRESS TO THE AMERICAN NATION, DECEMBER 29, 1940:

OUR policy is not directed towards war; its sole purpose is to keep war away from our country and away from our people. Democracy's fight against world conquest is being greatly aided, and must be more greatly aided, by the rearmament of the United States and by sending every ounce and every ton of ammunitions and supplies that we can possibly spare to help the defenders who are in the front line. . . .

We must be the great arsenal of democracy. For this is an emergency as serious as war itself. We must apply ourselves to our task with the same resolution, the same sense of urgency, the same spirit of patriotism and sacrifice as we would show were we at war. We have furnished the British with material support and we will furnish far more in future. There will be no falling back in our determination to aid Great Britain. No dictator, no combination of dictators, will weaken that determination by threats of how they will construe that determination.

I believe that the Axis Powers are not going to win this war. I base that belief on the latest and best information. We have no excuse for defeatism. We have every good reason for hope.

I have the profound conviction that the American people are determined to put forth a mightier effort than we have ever yet made to increase our production of all the implements of defence to bring success to our democratic neighbour. As President of the United States I call for that national effort. I call for it in the name of that nation which we love and honour, and which we are privileged and proud to serve. I call upon our people with absolute confidence that our common cause will richly succeed.

Chapter 137

NAZI POLICY IN THE OCCUPIED COUNTRIES: NORWAY, DENMARK AND POLAND

The End of 1940—An Iron Subjugation—Terboven's 'New Order' for Norway—Ban on King Haakon—Hatred of Vidkun Quisling—Political Environment in Denmark—Activities of Dr. Clausen—Slaughter of Livestock—Danes in the East Kent Regiment—The Polish-Czech Agreement—Mass Deportation of Poles to Germany—Concentration Camps—The Village of Death

(Holland, Belgium and Czechoslovakia in the same period are considered in Chap. 139)

SELDOM since Attila swept over Europe had the Continent entered upon such a miserable winter as in the final months of 1940. While Britain underwent continuous night bombing, the tortured lands of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Denmark and France—every country where the Nazis ruled—suffered a lack of food and fuel and a deprivation of liberty. An iron subjugation, enforced with the aid of tank, aeroplane and secret police, had as fitting corollary the gloom of blacked-out streets by which the Nazis hoped to evade the attentions of the avenging R.A.F., now stronger than ever after its defeat of the Nazi daylight onslaught on Britain.

Thousands of patriots died at the hands of Nazi execution squads for sabotage, and many others were harshly punished for trivial offences. Tens of thousands died of cold and starvation in their own homes, in the streets, and in concentration camps. But the conquered peoples clenched their teeth and held on in hope of deliverance. Amidst the most ruthless acts of oppression they kept their faith, encouraged by Britain's success in her own skies and by the British citizens' dogged defiance of Hitler's bombs. They even found time to jest wryly at the ludicrous "New Order" of Europe's self-styled "Master Race."



TEXTILE SHORTAGE IN THE CONQUERED COUNTRIES

Today, when almost every article of common use or consumption is made or derived from raw materials that can serve the war effort, the civilian directly feels the effect of war in a hundred ways. Here is an advertisement in an Oslo shop for paper towels, by use of which coupons could be saved, since all textiles were strictly rationed.

In Norway Joseph Terboven, the Reichskommissar, announced his New Order from Oslo radio station on October 1, 1940. Its main points were:

1. A ban on the return to Norway of the Norwegian Royal Family (King Haakon being in exile in Britain) and on the Free Norwegian Government in London, headed by Johan Nygaardsvold;

2. Establishment of a Nazi-approved Council of State of 13 members, replacing the Council of Administration set up by the Germans immediately after invasion;

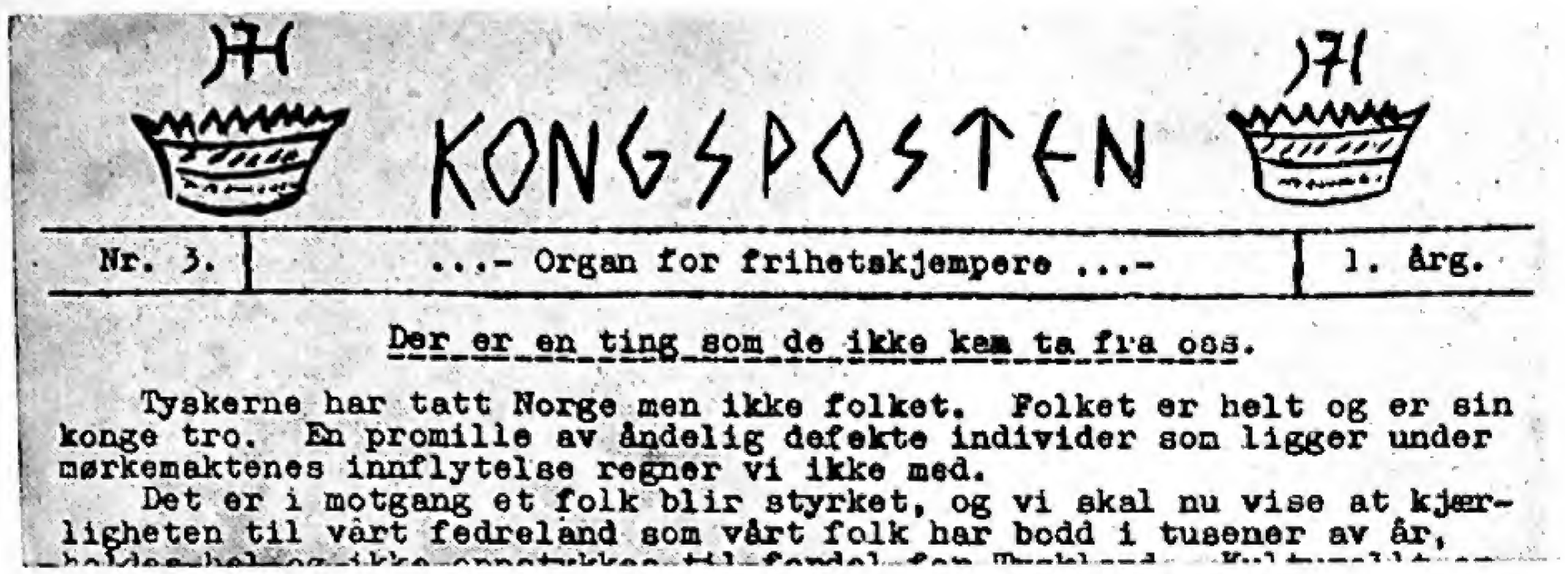
3. Dissolution of all existing political parties, which, said Terboven, were infected with pro-British sentiments, and a ban on the creation of new parties.

As a result of this ban on their monarch the Norwegians came to regard loyalty to the exiled King not as a political act but as an act of faith. For them the monarchy came to be identical with and a symbol of liberty. Terboven's decree only reinforced the conviction—which had been growing ever since the Norwegians witnessed the discomfited Germans at invasion exercises off the coast—that a British victory was in the end inevitable. The Norwegian Government, broadcasting daily from London, refuted the Nazi lies portraying a state of defeatism and terror in Britain.

Since portraits of King Haakon were banned, the Norwegians began in thousands to wear coins with the King's profile in their buttonholes. When the wearing of coins in this way was forbidden, Norwegians started to parade the streets of Oslo and other towns wearing a paper-clip in their lapel: this symbolized "Hold together." In the town of Saepsborg about twenty people were arrested for this offence in October. The Germans then prohibited the wearing of paper-clips, whereupon Norwegians began writing "Long Live the King" on banknotes.

But many people favoured more violent methods. In November a number of mysterious landslides occurred at several points simultaneously, and the railway between Oslo and Bergen was blocked in ten places. The Nazis suspected that patriotic Norwegians were keeping Britain well informed of German military movements. Early in December the Gestapo swooped down on various towns of Western Norway and claimed to have discovered many secret wireless sets. There were many arrests. Fish packers found ways to render unfit for consumption large supplies of tinned and salted fish commandeered by the Nazis for the German Army.

But the most bitter hatred was reserved for the Norwegian "Fuehrer," Vidkun Quisling (whose name came to be adopted to signify the new kind of traitor). Although the only alternative to Quisling would have been a purely German rule, opposition to Quisling and his supporters was so strong that they were howled down and sometimes beaten, even when guarded by police and Nazi storm troopers. At the beginning of November a "quisling" alderman tried to address a meeting at Moss, in Central Norway, but dynamite exploded when the loudspeakers were switched on. A riot followed: police, storm troopers and the fire brigade eventually restored order, but not before the windows of the


KONGSPOSTEN

Nr. 3. ...- Organ for frihetskjempere ...- 1. årg.

Der er en ting som de ikke kan ta fra oss.

Tyskerne har tatt Norge men ikke folket. Folket er helt og er sin konge tro. En promille av åndelig defekte individer som ligger under mørkemaktenes innflytelse regner vi ikke med.

Det er i motgang et folk blir styrket, og vi skal nu vise at kjærligheten til vårt fedreland som vårt folk har bodd i tusener av år,

NEWS-SHEET FOR LOYAL NORWEGIANS

This hand-printed news-sheet, 'The Royal Mail,' was circulated secretly in Norway under the noses of the occupying Nazis. The text begins : 'The Germans have taken Norway but not the Norwegians.' By such means patriotic Norwegians were heartened and the poisonous influence of 'Fritt Folk,' the Quisling organ, was nullified.

Norwegian Nazi Party's local headquarters had been smashed.

When the Quisling Party installed their men in the Trade Union Council for the practical application of Nazi "principles," Norwegian trade unionists systematically destroyed their own organization, built up with so much care and sacrifice over a great number of years, rather than let it be used by the Nazis. They burned their documents, lists of members and particulars of investments.

Quisling offered many inducements to his fellow countrymen to cooperate with him and the Germans. Announcing a new National flag for Norway—a gold cross on a red background—he told a meeting in Oslo in October, 1940, that capitalism had now been destroyed. Among new schemes for absorbing the unemployed special attention would be paid, he stated, to the development of Norway's waterfalls for electric power and the construction of 16,000 miles of new roads. He also announced the coming abolition of the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament), which was to be replaced by two houses, the "Naeringsting" and "Kulturting"—trade and culture organizations respectively.

Vidkun Quisling's Blandishments

In spite of intense hardship in Norway and his glowing descriptions of conditions in the Reich, Quisling failed lamentably in inducing Norwegians to go to Germany to work for the Nazis. A few hundred only had been enrolled at the end of the year, while the Germans had been led to expect a first batch of 5,000 in January, 1941.

Even schoolchildren were caught up in the flame of hatred, and teachers scarcely dared to protect the offspring of pro-quislings against the natural resentment of other youngsters. Quisling's paper, "Fritt Folk," was forced to threaten teachers with "manual labour and a prolongation of holidays (unpaid)" if they continued to show passivity towards the opponents of the new order. Many teachers and several scores of pupils were arrested.

Signs were by no means lacking that Terboven was becoming increasingly dissatisfied with Quisling, who was failing to make good his promises to the Nazis. In December, 1940, the traitor paid a second visit to Berlin, apparently to explain the failure of his labour-recruitment campaign and to tell Goebbels at first hand about the prevailing disorder in Norway. Norwegians speculated whether Quisling would be replaced by another Norwegian Nazi, possibly by Mogens.

Meanwhile Nazi despoliation went on. The Allied blockade had caused a lack of bread, for Norway was largely dependent on foreign wheat, of which nearly 204,000 tons had been imported in 1937. Oslo's egg consumption was reduced by seven-eighths. Food prices increased sixfold, and even fish, normally a main item of Norway's exports, became scarce in a country called upon to feed 250,000 Germans in addition to its own population. A wave of speculation and hoarding swept the country, in spite of drastic measures, such as the closing of shops offending against price regulations and the establishment of a Government monopoly in butter sales. Germany took the entire Norwegian "crisis" reserve of potatoes (amounting to 300,000 tons), which had been planted in spring to provide for the coming winter.

New clothing became rare, as German soldiers and officers (with currency provided gratis by the German authorities) bought up fur coats and every other kind of wearing apparel for their womenfolk in the Fatherland.

Norway Despoiled of Food

The Germans also "purchased" the greater part of Norwegian stocks of dried fish, for 4,000,000 Norwegian kroner. Previously they had taken enormous quantities of fresh fish, disregarding the protest of the Norwegian Board of Public Health that this would bring the country's winter food supplies to a perilously low level.

As a result of this plundering policy of the Nazi rulers and the inevitable interference with the former economic organization Norway was reduced



OSLO SHOWS ITS DISGUST AT QUISLINGITES

Left, marks made by Norwegian patriots on a cake shop at Oslo : the letters denote that the owner is a member of the Nasjonal Semling—that is, a quislingite. Right, damaged window at the office of Quisling's newspaper, 'Fritt Folk.'



RESULT OF THE NAZI DESPOLIATION OF NORWAY

Apart from the breakdown of economy resulting from the invasion and conquest, Norway suffered grievously from the big-scale requisitioning of food and foodstuffs by the Germans. Things soon came to such a pass that people had to be fed in state kitchens, and meat became almost unobtainable for Norwegians. Above is part of a long queue outside a butcher's in Oslo.

to the state where her people had to be fed in national kitchens. Hunger led to many demonstrations—as in Oslo, where housewives queueing outside a butcher's shop attacked two German soldiers who were carrying away pork. Anti-German demonstrations outside the German barracks in Aalesund in November resulted in an order forbidding the inhabitants to be out after dark four nights a week.

In another calculated act of repression the Nazis struck at the leaders of Norwegian patriotism. General Ruge, the popular C.-in-C. of the Army, was deported to Germany. At the end of the year several special gaols were being opened to house the overflow from the ordinary prisons. The first of these buildings, established at Stavanger, held several hundred political offenders, who were completely isolated from the outside world. Another prison, at Toensberg, contained many political prisoners transferred from numerous "auxiliary" gaols, who were kept without trial. Capital punishment was threatened for sheltering British subjects.

In the face of such economic and political pressure it would not have been surprising if many Norwegians had decided, as the Nazis intended, that collaboration with Quisling was the only alternative to extermination. But the heart of the people was sound, and even those who succumbed to Nazi coercion were held in check by the outspoken hatred of the majority for Nazi ideals.

The resignation, in December, 1940, of seven judges of the Supreme Court was an outstanding example of courage in high places. These men, all well known in Norway, exposed themselves and their families to the most bitter victimization because they refused to tolerate Quisling interferences with the Judicature.



JOSEPH TERBOVEN

On October 1, 1940, Terboven announced his 'New Order' for Norway. His first point was a ban on King Haakon and the Free Norwegian Government.

Photo, Keystone

The Free Norwegian Government in London, by frequent broadcasts, kept the Norwegian people fully informed of the true state of affairs outside Nazi-dominated Europe. They were told of the growing strength of the Norwegian Forces in Britain, commanded by General Fleischer. Norwegians from all over the world came to swell their ranks, and many made hazardous journeys in small boats over the North Sea to join up.

Norwegian sailors were manning some of the U.S.A. destroyers transferred to Britain. The part played by Norwegian M.T.B.s and gunboats was described, and an account was given of the work of the merchant marine. The oppressed

people were cheered to hear that Norwegian airmen in Canada, under the supervision of Mr. Bernt Balchen, had received their American-made 'planes. Several visits of Royal Air Force bombers to Norwegian military objectives heartened the people, although they would have liked to see more frequent R.A.F. raids, carried out on a far larger scale.

The broadcasts by Norwegian statesmen in London kept aflame the spirit of resistance. A determination to avoid the errors of the past, which had resulted in Norway's subjugation, was evident. Extracts from a book by Carl J. Hambro, President of the Norwegian Parliament, entitled "I Saw it Happen in Norway," brought home to Norwegians the perfidy of the Germans whom they had formerly welcomed as guests.

There was a notable broadcast in December made by Trygve Lie, Acting Foreign Minister for Dr. Koht, who was on leave, in which Norway's role in the post-War world was clearly defined.

"The fight for freedom," he said "can succeed only in close cooperation with other free nations. We shall now . . . try to find new forms for international cooperation which will have greater chances to succeed. One thing is certain : this cooperation will be something quite different from that which the present Germany is trying to force on us."

In Denmark the political environment was somewhat different, for the country had offered no resistance to German occupation and was not a belligerent. But many Danes, in spite of more lenient treatment, were by no means willing to cooperate with the Nazi invaders. Danish newspapers were still permitted a fair degree of liberty, which can be explained by Hitler's determination to maintain Denmark as the "show-piece" of invaded countries. In December, 1940, Dr. Fritz Clausen, Danish Nazi leader, sent to Himmler four replicas of Danish war trumpets from the Stone Age period. Clausen expressed the wish that "the original Germanic mode of life be realized on the basis of uniting blood-related Germanic peoples in the common task of furthering Nazi ideology in the New Europe."

The comment of the conservative Copenhagen newspaper "Nationaltidende" was: "Denmark is occupied by Germany under protest, and it is therefore tactless for any Dane to make any gift." The same newspaper commented as follows on the introduction by the Nazis of a new Norwegian flag : "It is a violation of all that is most deep-rooted in the common heritage of the Scandinavian peoples. For all Scandinavians the flag has never been a symbol of a system, but the most precious symbol of their very nationality."

In Denmark, as in Norway, the Germans were faced with a dilemma. Should they discard their much vaunted "collaboration" and create a purely German administration—with all this implied in increased hatred of the invader, a strengthening of passive resistance, and the need for a larger German garrison—or should they try to rule through the native quisling element? The chosen instrument of the Germans in Denmark was Clausen, a native of the province of South Jutland and leader of the Danish National Socialist Workers' Party, the largest Nazi organization in Denmark. Forty-seven years old, Dr. Clausen worked ardently to create what he called "a revival of Danish national spirit," promising the restoration of former Danish possessions—some lost by Denmark centuries earlier. But his campaign fizzled out, and the Danes remained indifferent to promises of territorial gains under the "New Order."

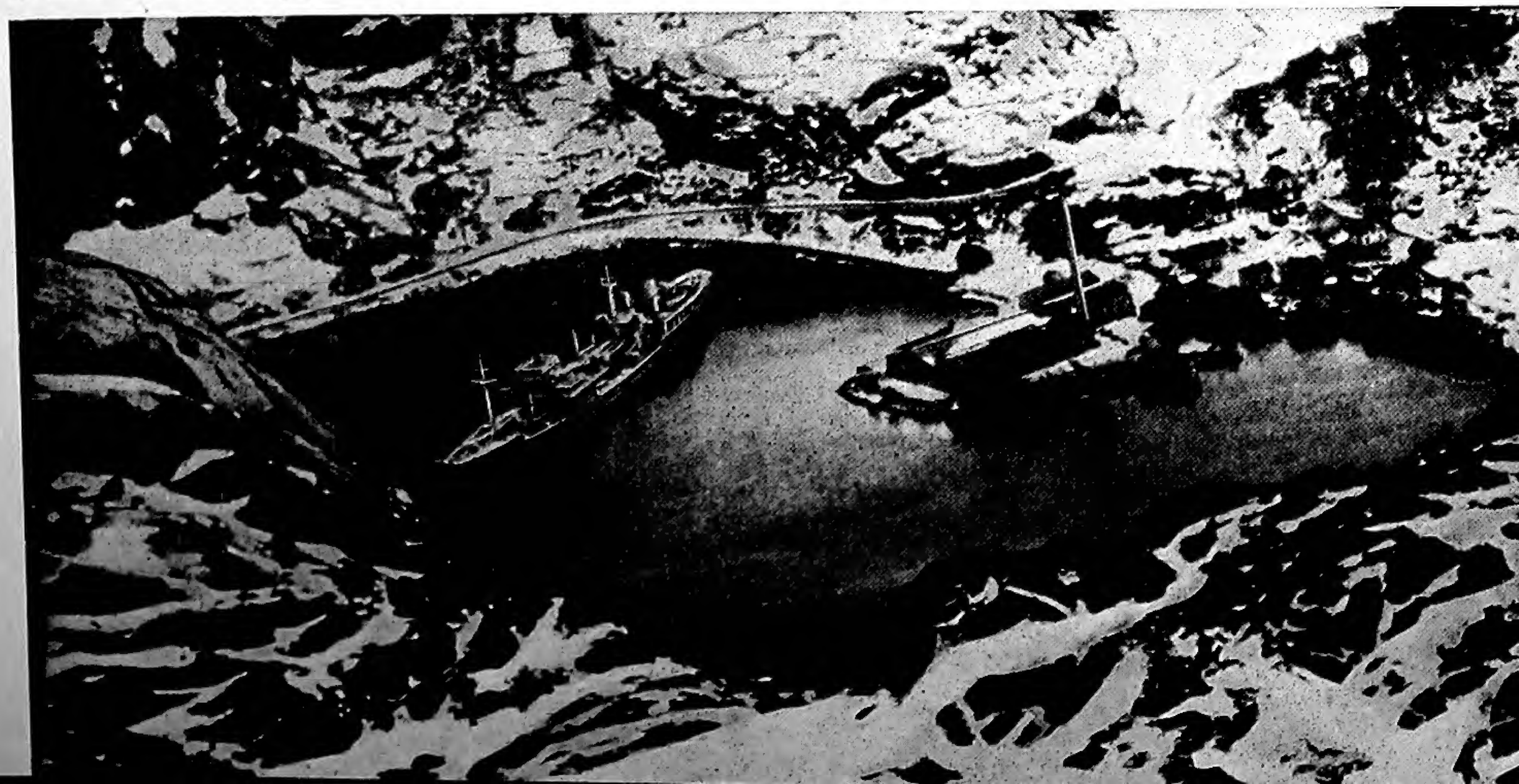
Unsuccessful Danish 'Quisling'

Clausen was a heavily-built man of the Goering type, with a puffy face ; he had a love of uniforms and ostentation, and was an unappealing figure. Then, too, King Christian and other members of the Royal Family still retained a strong hold on the people's affections. The King's acquiescence in the German occupation was suspected to be a very unwilling one, and it was realized that he was as much a victim of German deceit as they themselves. In any case the alternatives to the monarchy would have been a dictatorship by Clausen or German military rule in all its ruthlessness. The sympathies of Prince Axel were believed to be with Britain, and it was widely rumoured that two requests

HIDING PLACE OF THE NAZI PRISON SHIP 'ALTMARK'

This historic photograph, taken by a Coastal Command aircraft on reconnaissance over Norwegian waters on February 16, 1940, but only released many months later, disclosed the 'Altmark' sheltering in Joessing Fjord and gave the first information of its whereabouts. The successful attack on the prison ship by H.M.S. 'Cossack' and the release of nearly 300 British prisoners followed. For the full narrative and other photographs see Chapter 63, pages 668—674.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright





NAZIS IN DENMARK MARCH TO BILLETS

Though Denmark was not a belligerent and had offered no resistance to the German invasion and occupation, she soon suffered the same ruthless exploitation as other countries under Nazi control Pigs and cattle, for which it was impossible to procure fodder, were taken away to Germany for slaughter, a large percentage even ot her milch cows being killed off. This photograph was taken in the early summer of 1940, not long after the invasion.

Photo, E.N.A.

he had made for permission to visit Britain had been "discouraged."

The German youths who had marched so confidently into Denmark in May, expecting to be treated as "liberators from international Jewry and capitalism," were astonished as time went on at the "lack of love" on the part of the Danes. German officers found it difficult to understand the attitude of Danish girls who, when asked for a dance, turned to Danish friends and said: "Take me home, I am tired." Mutual resentment between Danes and Germans grew until there were scuffles at the very entrance to the Royal Palace, and King Christian found it necessary to warn his people to treat the Germans in a correct and dignified manner.

The utter ruthlessness of German exploitation was described by an economic expert in London in the autumn of 1940. Instead of allowing Denmark to build up reserves of meat when feeding stuffs for her pigs and cattle began to run short, the Germans took away livestock for slaughter in their own country. In six weeks from the beginning of September, 1940, they took 20,000 head of cattle a week—three times the normal exports to all countries. Eight per cent of Denmark's milch cows, 30 per cent of her heifers, one half of her pigs and half her poultry were earmarked for slaughter for German consumption. The Nazis also requisitioned the Jutland potato crop.

Danish Livestock Plundered

Though the Nazi occupation of the country had been peacefully accepted, apart from a clash on the first day, many of the people found it impossible to tolerate the hegemony of the Germans. In Denmark itself there was no focus for active work to free the country, though, of course, there were "underground" movements, sternly discouraged by the Government. Outside Denmark, however, eager patriots found a nucleus around which they could build up a force designed to fight for the restoration of Denmark's independence. In London there was set up in October, 1940, the Danish Council to work for a British victory. Under the presidency of Mr. T. K. Kielberg it held its first meeting at the Danish Club in London. "The organization," said Mr. Kielberg, "will link up Danes anxious to serve the cause of liberty. It will link up with the great Danish populations in America and the British Empire." Thus yet another band of patriots was added to the number who saw in Britain the only hope of their countries' deliverance, and soon Londoners beheld in the streets khaki-clad figures with "Denmark" worked on their shoulder-flashes. These were Danes who had volunteered in a British regiment particularly dear to them—the East Kent (Buffs) Regiment, of which King Christian had for long been a Colonel.

During the autumn of 1940 Poland, first of our Allies involved in the war with Nazidom, was looking and planning ahead for the Europe of the future. In November she came to an agreement with the Czech Provisional Government in London. Britain took a lively interest in this rapprochement between two Powers whose relations had been embittered by the Polish seizure of the Teschen district of Eastern Czechoslovakia on October 1, 1938, while Germany was marching into the Sudetenland. The Poles now recognized this action to have been a mistaken one, and it was in the interests of all the Allies to restore good relations.

Mr. Churchill was present, together with Dr. Hugh Dalton, Minister of Economic Warfare, Mr. R. A. Butler, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and other statesmen, at the first meeting between Czechs and Poles in the Polish House on October 9, 1940. Poland was represented by General Sikorski, Prime Minister and C.-in-C. of the Polish Forces, and M. Wladyslav Rackiewicz, President of the Polish Republic. Dr. Edvard Benes, President of the Provisional Czechoslovak Government, represented his country.

The outcome of this meeting was a Declaration signed on November 11, 1940, in London. The chief provisions read:

"The two Governments consider it imperative to declare solemnly that Poland and Czechoslovakia, closing once and for all the period of past recriminations and disputes, and taking into consideration the community of their fundamental interests, are determined, on the conclusion of this war, to enter as independent and Sovercign States into a closer political and economic association which would become the basis of a new order in Central Europe and a guarantee of its stability.

"Moreover, both Governments express the hope that in this cooperation, based on respect for the freedom of nations, the principles of democracy and the dignity of man, they will also be joined by other countries in that part of the European continent."

This Agreement was freely admitted to be only an initial step in the creation


PO PRZECZYTANIU ODDAJ DRUGIEMU!

GŁOS POLSKI

Rok I AD-1 1 GRUDNIA 1940 R. Nr. 26

Polsko-angielska umowa wojskowa podpisana została dnia 5 sierpnia 1940 roku w siedzibie premiera angielskiego. Ze strony polskiej podpisali ją: Naczelny Wódz Gen. Sikorski oraz Min. Zaleski, ze strony angielskiej: premier Churchill oraz Min. Halifax. Ratyfikacja umowy przez parlament angielski nastąpiła dnia 21-go

'THE VOICE OF POLAND'

One of the 140 secret loyalist news-sheets, 'Glos Polski'—'Polish Voice'—was circulated extensively. Photograph shows the heading of the issue for December 1, 1940.





SCENES OF HORROR FROM THE POLISH MASSACRE

Supplied by the Polish Ministry of Information, these indisputable photographs show (above) blindfolded Polish civilians being led to the execution ground in the forest of Palmiry, outside Warsaw ; and (right) a firing party at its dreadful task : one soldier watches at the 'ready' whilst another loads.

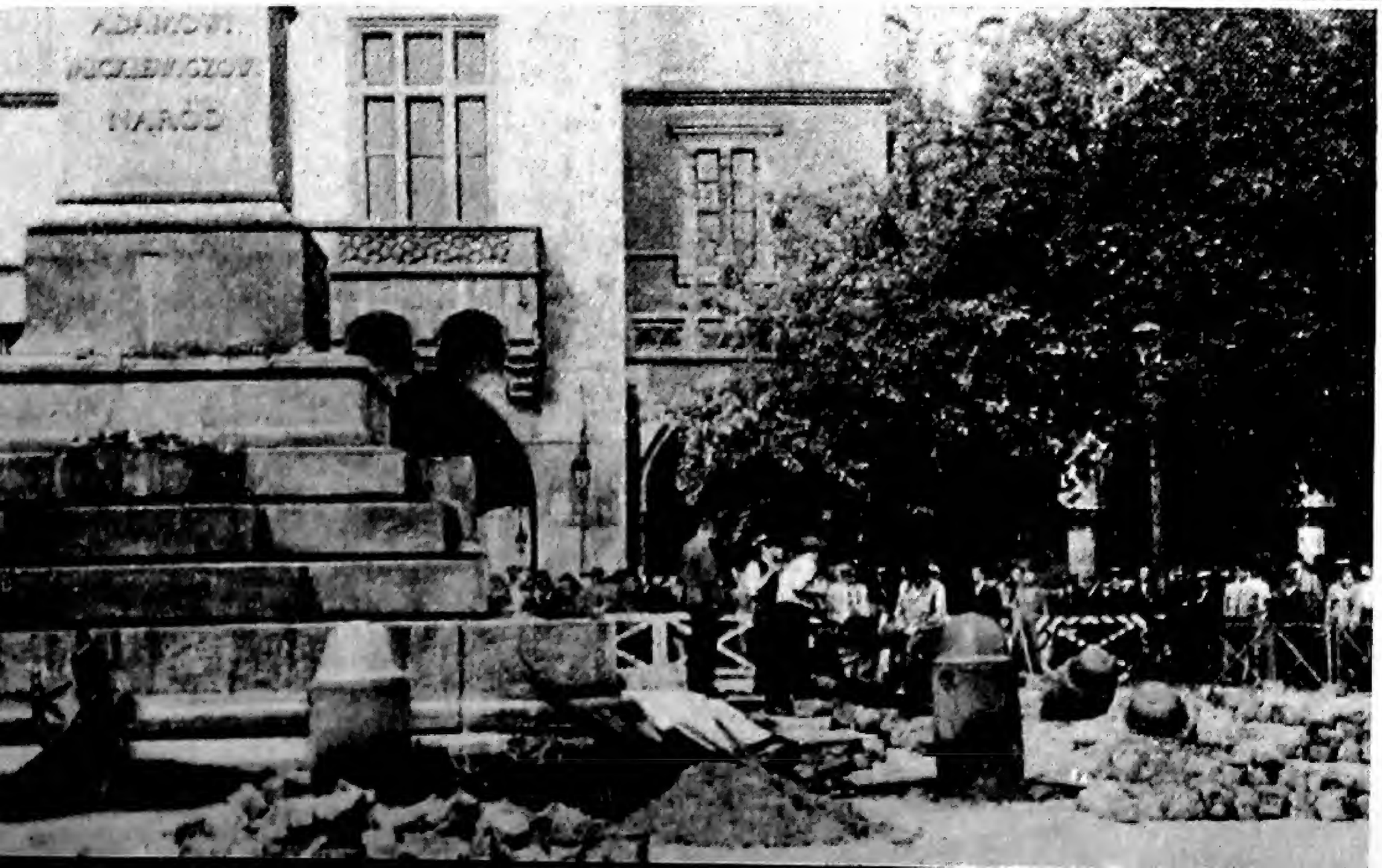
German aims, as might be expected, were the absolute opposite of Czech and Polish ones. The "Berliner Boersen Zeitung" in December, 1940, published an illuminating article expressing the view that all links existing between different Slavonic peoples should be cut off and destroyed. Poles should be divided from Czechs and Slovaks, and a wedge should be driven between different national groups in Poland. Attempts to put this programme into practice were seen in the description of the Polish Highlanders of the Northern Tatra as members of the German "Marcoman Stamm," while the Slovaks residing on the southern side of the mountains were "Slavs." Similar efforts were made in Silesia to separate Poles from Czechs.

The oppression of the Poles continued unabated, and 15,000 people were exiled from Warsaw alone in September, 1940. With Eastern Poland in Russian hands and Western and Northern Poland incorporated in Germany, the remaining territory, equal in size to half pre-war Poland, was called upon to support a greatly increased population. The property of many Poles in Western and Northern Poland was given to Germans from the Baltic States, and scores of thousands of Poles were deported to the Warsaw Central Government. Many of the deportees died on the way. They were packed into trucks—men separated from their wives, mothers from their children—and sent on the five-day journey in mid-winter, when the temperature was 22 degrees below zero.

With a great many of its buildings damaged or destroyed, Warsaw was

of a future Europe which should be freed from the constant menace of German aggression. But it was a step in the right direction, and was hailed as such by those countries which remembered all too vividly that the thirteen pre-war States in Central Europe lying between Italy, Germany, and Russia were unable, in spite of local ententes, to ward off aggression by the Great Powers to which they served as "buffer" States. Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Polish-Czech declaration was that it envisaged the subsequent collaboration of other nations in a Democratic Europe.





INCIDENT IN THE ATTACK ON POLISH CULTURE

Stages in the destruction by the Nazis of the monument in Cracow to the poet and patriot Adam Mickiewicz. With devilish thoroughness the Nazis struck at all cultural and educational organizations in an attempt to stamp out for ever Polish national aspirations.

Photos, Polish Ministry of Information

ASPECTS OF POLISH LIFE UNDER THE NAZIS

Top, conscripted Polish fishermen are seen cutting blocks of ice for the German authorities from the frozen River San. Below, Poles refuse to buy or advertise in the German newspapers. Instead, they write or print their 'wants' and affix them to a wall or the barricaded window of an empty shop, as here shown. One card says: 'Lessons in English.'

Photos, E.N.A.; Polish Ministry of Information





CELEBRATING A YEAR OF NAZI TYRANNY

In page 1441 is a photograph of the Governor-General of Poland at the anniversary celebrations. Here is Dr. Walther Frank with some of his guests of honour : Left to right, Meissner, Minister of State ; Seldte, Labour Minister ; Hühnlein ; Lutze, S.A. chief ; Frank, Governor-General ; Frick, Minister of the Interior ; Daluege, General of Police ; Stuckhart, Brigade Leader, S S.

Photo, Associated Press

crowded to the limit—whole families packed into single rooms, with no heating, lighting or windows. It was estimated that some 40,000 people died of cold and starvation. The bread ration of about half a pound per person daily was of steadily deteriorating quality. Poles could obtain meat only once in six weeks, and then only in minute quantities. Fat, issued on ration cards, consisted solely of black colza oil. Coal sold at 500 zlotys (£20 at pre-war valuation) a ton, or more than seven times the official price fixed in the summer, and was unobtainable by the ordinary inhabitant. Yet the unhappy, half-starved Poles could gaze with hungry, glistening eyes at certain shops reserved for the Germans, which were crammed with butter, fats, fruits, eggs, fish, white bread and meat at pre-war prices.

Those deported for forced labour in German factories were not much better off. They were compelled to wear a large "P" on the right breast, and Germans were forbidden to treat them as equals, to fraternize, eat at the same table, or go to church with them. They were paid half the rate of wages received by Germans for similar work.

Forced Labour for Poles

Even worse was the fate of Poles in concentration camps, where many famous scientists and political leaders were sent. One Pole who escaped to Britain said :

"Those of us who live through all this will have something to tell, and it will be so terrible that people will grow grey when they hear it. We have seen people with their teeth knocked out, with their ears pulled off ; people who have been killed by being kicked in the stomach or struck with fists over the heart ; people who have had the ends of rubber tubes forced into their mouths and water poured down the tube until they burst."

The death at German hands of Mieczyslaw Niedzialkowski, leader of the Polish Socialist Party, was confirmed in December, 1940. News reached London that Niedzialkowski was shot by the S.S. on June 26 in the village of Palmiry. This was the notorious "village of death," 15 miles outside Warsaw, where the Gestapo carried out most of the executions relating to political prisoners. There were more than 6,000 nameless graves in Palmiry, among them that of Niedzialkowski, who was executed on the same day as Maciej Rataj, leader of the Peasant Party.

In that part of Poland under Russian domination some 100,000 Polish workers left their homes to find work in the U.S.S.R., and 25,000 miners were employed in the Don Basin. By the end of October, 1940, the mass evacuation of Poles from what had become a Russian defence zone was nearly completed. Polish war prisoners numbering 200,000 were sent principally to Central and Northern Russia. Others—landowners, peasants, professional men and workers—were sent to Soviet Turkestan and the region of Sverdlovsk in Siberia. The Soviet Press maintained that most of the Poles were voluntary exiles, but the choice was probably one between exile or starvation, as the whole economy of Poland had been thoroughly disrupted by the war and by the subsequent peace settlement—which left Poland divided between two armed Powers whose only considerations in fixing joint frontiers were military ones.

In spite of these humiliations and trials the spirit of the Poles remained unbroken. Though desperately needing food they refused an offer of supplies from the United States which would possibly have gone partly into German stomachs. Unable to demonstrate—even funeral processions were forbidden by the Nazis—Poles celebrated national anniversaries by mute and passive protest, such as buying no newspapers or staying indoors. They listened in secret to the constant broadcasts from the Free Polish Government in London, in spite of the wholesale confiscation of wireless sets and the savage penalties imposed on anyone caught listening to or passing on foreign broadcasts.

Poland's Unbroken Spirit

From the brutality of their oppression the Poles could sense the Nazis' craven fear of coming retribution. Confirmation of this was seen in a letter smuggled from Poland to London in December. This mentioned that German tenants often asked dispossessed Polish house-owners to give them a written statement that they had behaved correctly. "These people," said the writer, "have a guilty conscience and they live in constant fear that with the reverses which may come the whole hastily constructed 'order' will collapse."

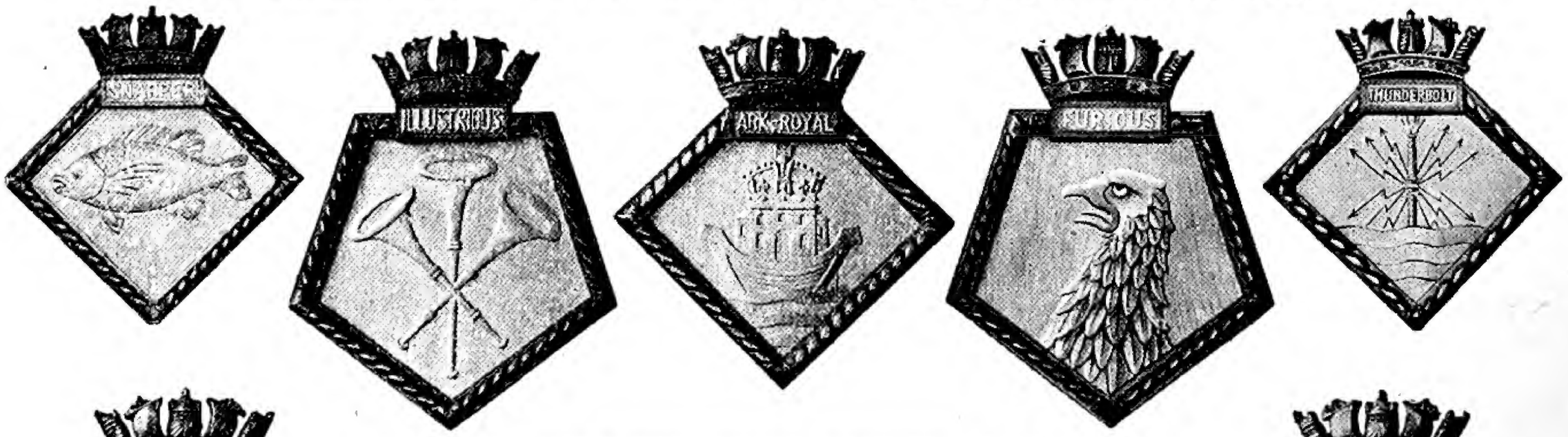
BATTLE CRUISERS AND BATTLESHIPS



CRUISERS



SUBMARINES AND AIRCRAFT CARRIERS





NAVAL HERALDRY—SHIPS' BADGES OF THE R.N.

Although each regiment of the British Army has for long possessed an official badge, it was not until 1919 that the Lords of the Admiralty decreed that the ships of the Royal Navy should do likewise. The work of designing these insignia was placed in the hands of Mr. Charles ffoulkes, C.B., Adviser to the Admiralty on Heraldry from 1918 to 1937, who during this period produced 500 of them. Today the College of Heralds is responsible for the designing of the badges. This selection includes many ships whose names have become widely familiar in the first two years of the war. (See also illus. p. 1463.)

By permission of the Controller H.M. Stationery Office



DESTROYERS



Chapter 138

NAVAL OPERATIONS IN FOUR OCEANS: EVENTS DURING DECEMBER 1940

Intensified Nazi Propaganda—Commerce Raiders in North and South Atlantic —Fine Work of Greek Navy—Mussolini Purges Italian Naval Command—Cooperation with Land Forces in Libya—Our Submarines Destroy Convoys—Brilliant Night Attack on Italian Ports—Indian Ocean Operations: Bombardment of Kismayu—Enemy Raiders in Far Eastern Waters

AFTER the dashing actions in the Atlantic and Mediterranean during November, 1940, the December operations at sea may have appeared dull to the layman, but there was constant action and, considering the circumstances, appreciable progress. In home waters there was a steady intensification of all forms of German attack on shipping, but as the small craft damaged at Dunkirk returned to service after repairs the defence was improved and the advantage of the occupied French ports to German submarines was, to an extent, nullified; in the North Sea and Channel the enemy relied largely on dive-bombing 'planes and motor torpedo-boats, while our own scored many successes against supply ships off the Dutch, Belgian and French coasts.

In order to counteract uneasiness in Germany there was intensified Nazi propaganda on the naval side, and this directed all possible attention to the motor torpedo-boats, whose exploits were constantly described. The reports minimized their danger from British destroyers and claimed on the 17th that several of them had engaged a destroyer flotilla and driven it off without sustaining damage; while on the 23rd the claim was that these small craft had sunk a 10,000-ton tanker and a 6,000-ton freighter under the noses of six British destroyers. The propaganda year finished with a typically bombastic order of the day from Admiral Raeder, assuring the German navy that it had shaken British sea supremacy.

Attention continued to be centred on the Battle of the Atlantic in both hemispheres, Rear-Admiral Yates Stirling, U.S.N., publicly suggesting that the American Navy should convoy their ships to Britain and receiving considerable support.

Generally speaking, there was little reliable news of purely naval operations released concerning the Atlantic area, but on December 5 the armed merchant cruiser "Carnarvon Castle," normally a mail motorship on the Union-Castle service to South Africa, encountered a fast German commerce-destroyer, a converted merchantman, in the South Atlantic some 700 miles north-east of the River Plate. The superior speed of the German permitted her to keep the range open, and she contrived before escaping to damage the "Carnarvon Castle," by a shell in the engine-room. The British ship was allowed 72 hours at Montevideo for urgent repairs but Brazil later protested against the action as occurring within the Pan-American Neutrality Zone.

On Christmas Day, 1940, another surface raider, the 10,000-ton 8-inch-gun cruiser "Admiral Hipper," attacked a convoy in the North Atlantic and succeeded in hitting one ship, causing slight damage. The raider was surprised when, instead of an auxiliary cruiser escort, H.M.S. "Berwick" appeared, nominally of her own power but much older, and she immediately retired at high speed. Salvoes were exchanged at long range with decreasing visibility; the "Berwick" was hit and sustained some casualties, but succeeded in landing at least one salvo before the enemy disappeared, when she then turned aside to sink the enemy supply ship "Baden." The Germans claimed that they had sunk a 6,000-ton ship and severely damaged another, as well as beating off the escort without damage to themselves.

The submarine side was also kept to the fore by enemy propaganda. On the 8th the Germans officially announced



MORE EXPLOITS BY H.M. SUBMARINE 'TRUANT'

Under Lieut.-Commander H. A. V. Haggard, R.N. (left), the submarine 'Truant,' here seen at her launching, operated with great success against Italian sea communications during December, 1940. On the night of Dec. 13-14 she sank a supply ship: next night, a heavily laden Italian tanker. Earlier successes were the torpedoing of the German cruiser 'Blücher' in Northern waters and the rescue of the 'Haxby' captives (see pp. 822 and 1068).

Photos, Fox; G.P.U.



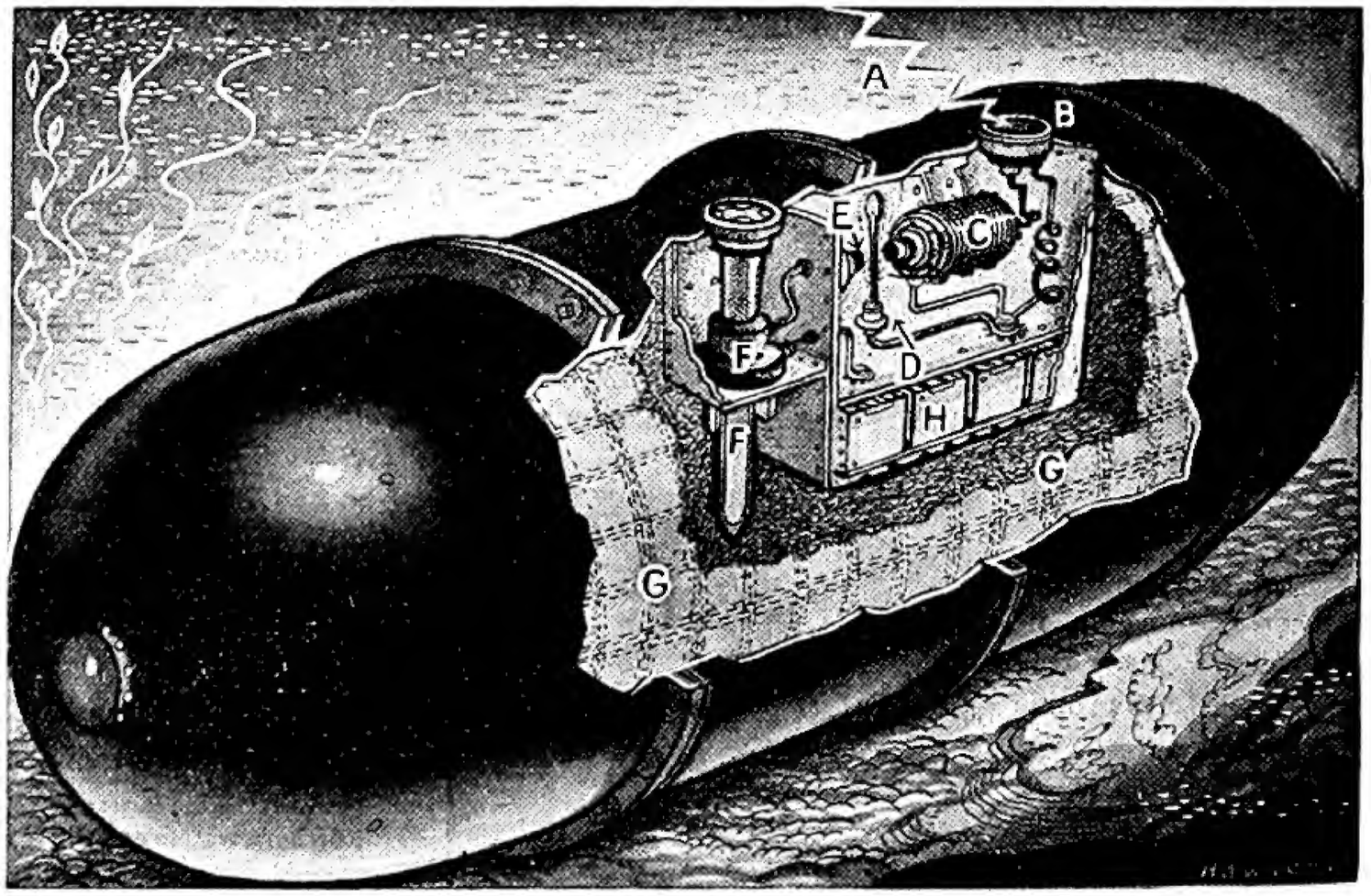


DEADLY MINES SOWN BY AIRCRAFT

The introduction of minelaying by aircraft led to the invention of new types of weapon—the magnetic and the acoustic mine ; a diagram of the first is printed in page 724, while the second is depicted below. Left, an acoustic mine explodes on detonation by a minesweeping trawler. Below, left, Lieut. John Miller, G.C., R.N.V.R. ; he was awarded the George Cross for ' great gallantry and devotion to duty ' in dealing with mines and became an expert at this work. Right, how an acoustic mine operates. Sound waves (A) from a ship's propellers affect the hydrophone (B) and set in vibration the trembler (D) of the electro-magnet (C). When the ship is near enough the trembler touches the contact (E) and sets off the detonator (F), which in turn explodes the massive charge (G). (H) is the battery.

Photo, " News Chronicle " ; Diagram by Haworth ; Portrait of Lieut. Miller from a painting by William Dring, Official Purchase 1941 *: Crown Copyright*





that they had commissioned a new type of submarine that would " bring Germany the conquest of the seas." Four days later they claimed to have sunk four ships, of 30,000 tons. Continuing their policy of putting forward submarine " aces " for hero worship, they announced on December 20 that Captain Schepke had sunk his 40th merchantman, with a total of 208,975 tons gross, and that he was the third U-boat commander to exceed the 200,000-ton mark. Italian submarines were also active in the Atlantic as well as in the Mediterranean, and claimed that the destruction of the Canadian destroyer " Saguenay," already announced by the British Government as lost, was to their credit.

In the Mediterranean area there was naturally more movement. Encouraged by their successes against the Italians on land and by the way the main enemy fleet had withdrawn from Taranto after the British air attack of November 11-12, the Greek Navy was very active and its submarines harassed the enemy supply services. In this they were fully supported by British units, but in view of the numerous Italian flotillas available for defensive purposes little news was published for fear of giving help to the enemy. Suda Bay was admittedly a very useful base for this purpose, and the enemy were constantly threatening to bomb it but seldom did. The most dashing feat was, perhaps, on Christmas Eve, when the Greek submarine " Papanicolis," under Captain Iatrides, made a magnificently cool attack on a troop convoy between Brindisi and Valona and sank three big ships, afterwards escaping a heavy depth-charge barrage laid by the escorting destroyers. On the last day of 1940 it was reported that four Italian supply ships, carrying guns and lorries, had been sunk off the Yugoslav-Albanian border. The Italians managed to save most of their ships from the advancing Greeks, but on December 7 it was announced that an Italian destroyer, damaged by aircraft, had been captured at Santi Quaranta and raised to be repaired for Greece.

After their repeated failures against the British and the Greeks, strong disciplinary action was taken in the Italian fleet. On December 8 it was made known that there had been a purge of senior officers, headed by Admiral Domenico Cavagnari, and on the 22nd it was learnt that at least one Italian rating had been shot for espionage on behalf of Britain, while others were imprisoned.

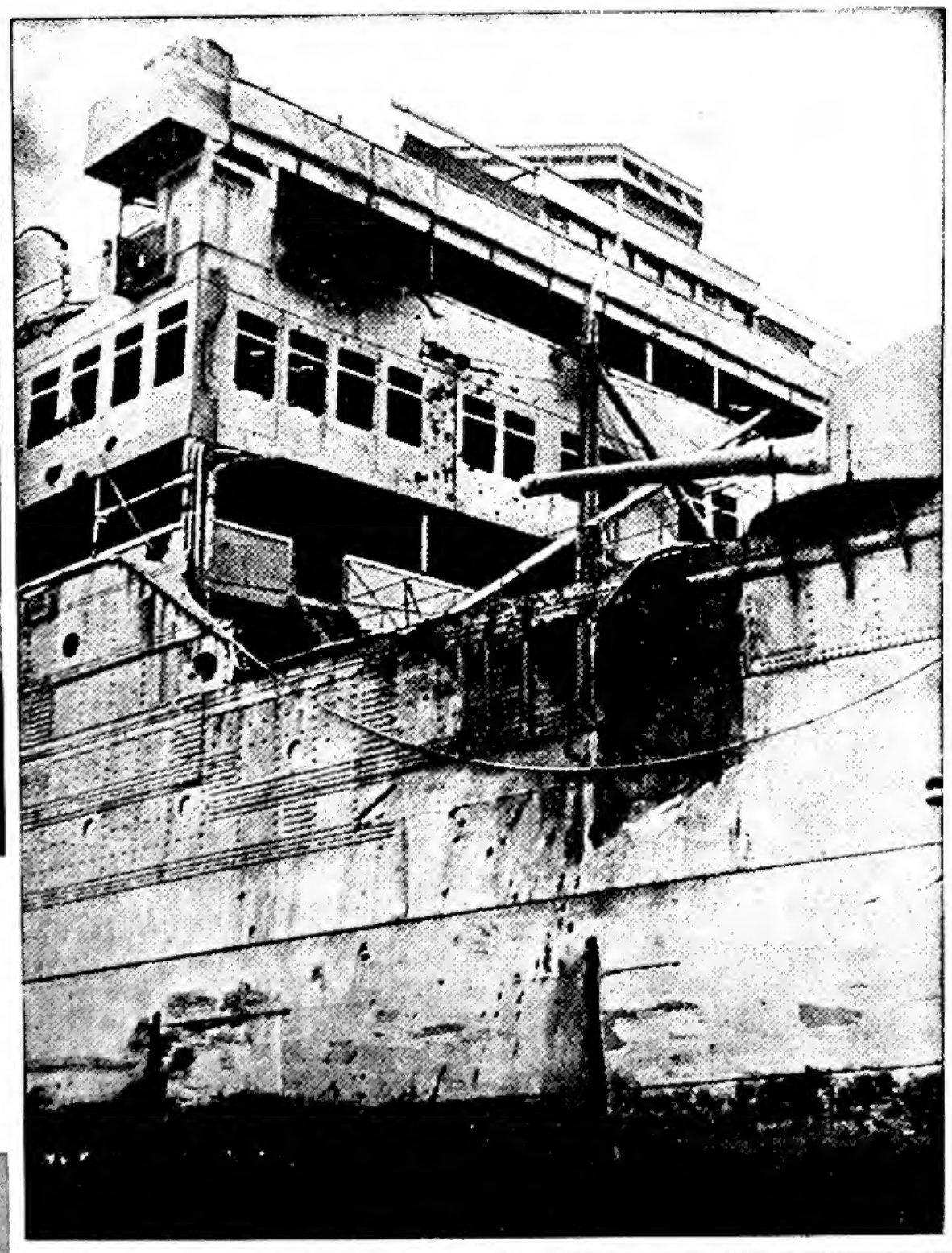
Italian Naval Purge

There were many rumours of other punitive actions, though these were not fully substantiated.

For public consumption the Italian propaganda became more and more extravagant. On December 11 it was claimed that Italy had sunk 37 British men-of-war and 33 merchant ships between her entry into the struggle and December 10, having 23 of her own ships sunk and four damaged. Four days later Italy claimed that the submarine "Neghelli" had torpedoed and sunk a cruiser of the Southampton type off the Egyptian coast. On the other hand, Italians were not pleased when their German friends attempted to bolster up the reputation of Mussolini's navy, and there was a storm of indignation throughout Italy when the "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung," working under the strict control common to all the German press, carefully explained that the Italian Navy had been staying in port in order to save fuel.

On December 13 two Italian submarines which had been chased into Tangier by British ships, and had remained sheltering there on the plea of necessary repairs, slipped out in the early morning darkness and returned to their base.

From December 8 onwards Naval co-operation was particularly useful to the British Army operating in Libya. A number of Naval units, including the 7,200-ton, 15-inch-gun monitor "Terror," from Singapore, and the 625-ton, 6-inch-gun river gunboat "Ladybird" from China, took part in this work, harassing Italian troops which were attempting to escape along the coast road and breaking up military formations. Between the 13th and the 18th both heavy and light forces bombarded Bardia and other points at frequent intervals, the little "Ladybird" (which drew only four feet of water and whose

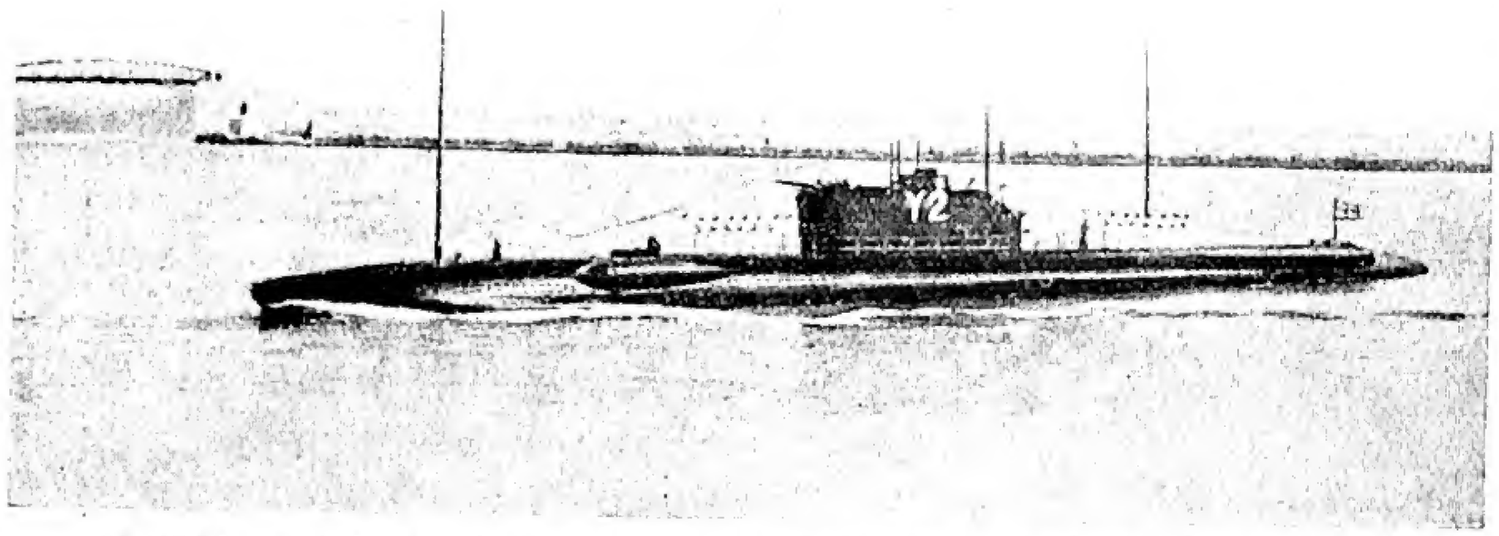




'CARNARVON CASTLE'S' BRUSH WITH A RAIDER

On December 5, 1940, the 'Carnarvon Castle,' a 22-knot motor-ship formerly on the Union Castle service to South Africa, engaged a German commerce raider in the South Atlantic. By superior speed the enemy kept at a distance, damaged the engine-room of the 'Carnarvon Castle' by a lucky shot (see photo, right), and escaped. Above, Captain Hardy, commander of the liner, with Sir Eugen Millington-Drake, British Minister (on left), at Montevideo. Below, crowds welcome the 'Carnarvon Castle.'

Photos, Fox; Associated Press; Sport & General



GREEK SUBMARINE WHICH HARASSED ITALIAN CONVOYS

On Christmas Eve, 1940, the Greek submarine 'Papanicolis,' built in France in 1926, made a cool and skilful attack on an Italian troop convoy between Brindisi and Valona and sank three big ships. She was commanded by Captain Iatrides.

Photo, Grand Studio

guns were designed to fire over the banks of Eastern rivers) working into very close range with the greatest audacity and having remarkable escapes. On December 16 an attempt by enemy torpedo-dropping aircraft was frustrated without difficulty, the Italian submarine "Naiade" having been sunk while making a similar attempt shortly before. The Admiralty sent Sir Andrew Cunningham and the Fleet special congratulations.

The Navy was also of the greatest help in worrying the enemy supply and transport services carrying reinforcements across the "waist" of the Mediterranean. Only the submarine "Truant," already familiar to the public on account of her dramatic adventures off the Danish, Norwegian and French coasts, was singled out for individual mention in this area. Under Lieutenant-Commander H. A. V. Haggard, R.N., she was reported to have "been operating with great success against Italian sea communications off the south of Italy." On the night of December 13–14 she encountered a well-protected convoy of heavily laden supply ships off Cape Spartivento; one enemy was certainly sunk and another probably so. The next night "Truant" sank a large Italian tanker steaming south of the Calabrian coast.

H.M.S. 'Truant' in the Mediterranean

The success at Taranto on November 11–12, which interfered so seriously with the naval support for the Italians in Albania, was followed up by a dashing night attack on December 18. The Straits of Otranto, only forty-four miles wide, very heavily mined and flanked by several bases for the torpedo-carrying aircraft in which the Italians placed such faith, were regarded by the enemy as being impassable to anything more than an occasional submarine;

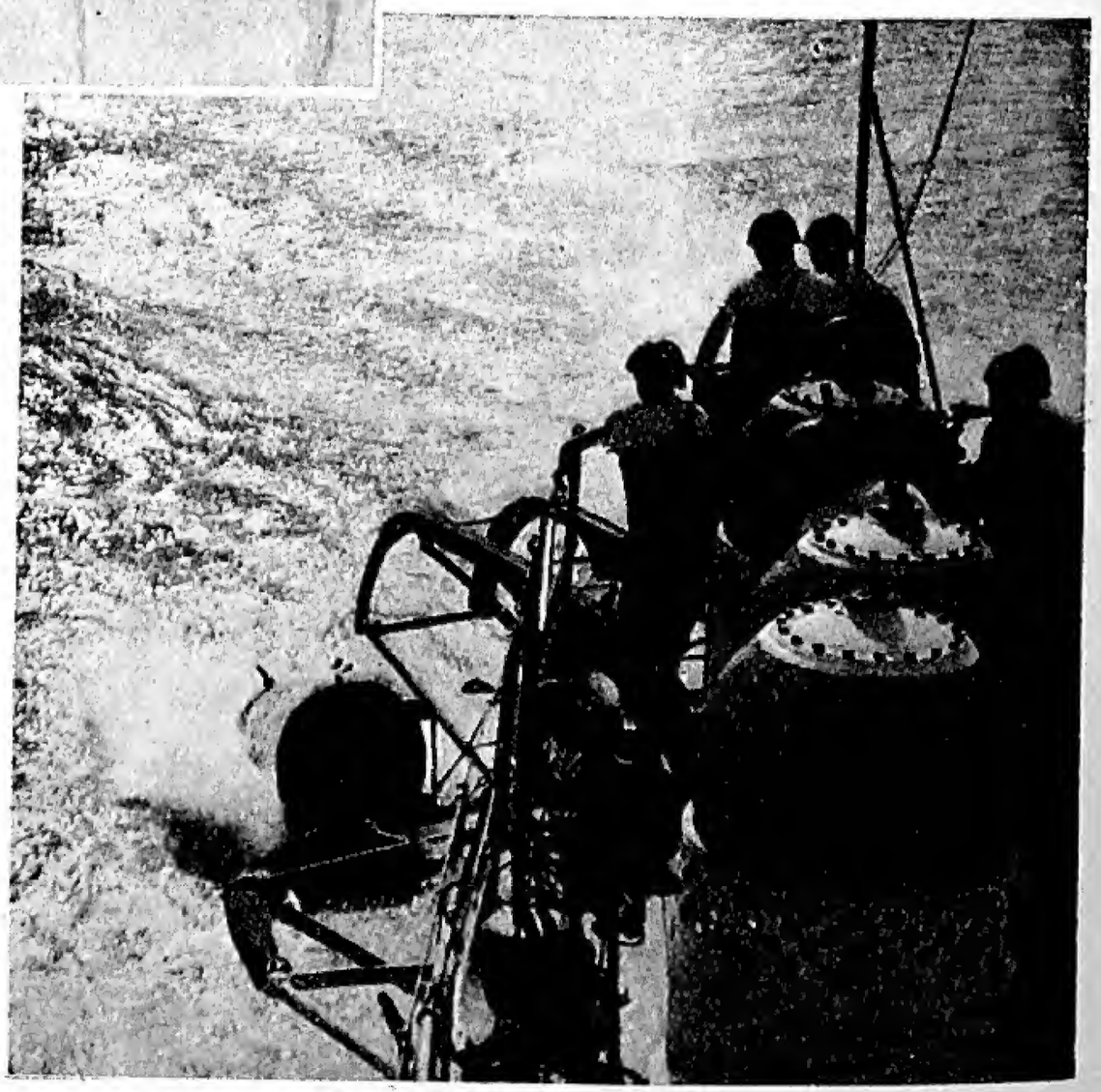


but a considerable force of the Mediterranean Fleet went through them apparently undetected and certainly not attacked. Vice-Admiral Pridham-Wippell, with his flag in the "Orion," led the screening force of cruisers and destroyers and swept up the Adriatic as far as Bari and Durazzo without encountering enemy ships. At the same time Admiral Cunningham, in his flagship "Warspite," with supporting ships and a destroyer escort, appeared off Valona in fairly heavy weather with intermittent moonlight, and in twelve minutes fired over a hundred tons of high explosive shells into the naval base, which was soon on fire in several places. The heavy land batteries, reputed to be so formidable, did not fire a single round while the attack was in progress; it was only when the British ships were withdrawing towards the southward that a few star shells were fired, without any attempt at serious resistance. The bombardment was a great encouragement and help to the Greeks.

Navy in Indian Ocean

The British Fleet's work in the Indian Ocean principally consisted of dull patrol and blockading operations, for the time was not yet ripe for a major movement, but it kept the Italian ships tightly bottled up in East African ports and denied their use to raiders. As a diversion certain ships bombarded the port of Kismayu in Italian Somaliland, doing damage to the military stores collected there and attracting a heavy fire from the coastal batteries, which failed to do any damage.

The situation in the Mediterranean was made more embarrassing to the Allies by the uncertain attitude of the Vichy Government. On December 12 it was reported that, after having been allowed to break the British



ITALY'S NAVAL CHIEF LOSES HIS POST

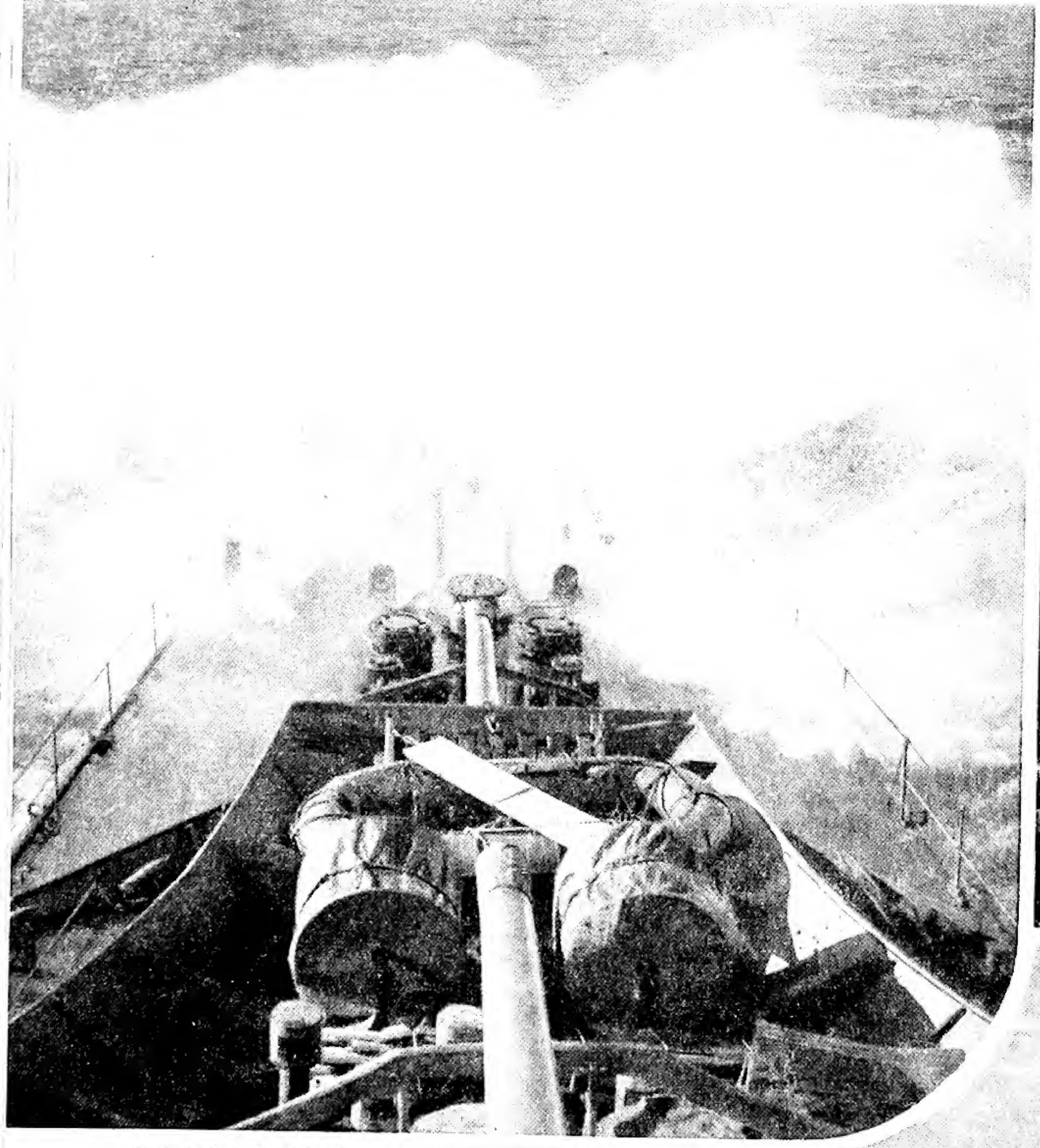
Admiral of the Fleet Domenico Cavagnari was retired in December, 1940, because of the poor show made against the British and Greek forces. Lower photo shows an Italian gunboat operating off Albania.

Photos, E.N.A.; Planet News

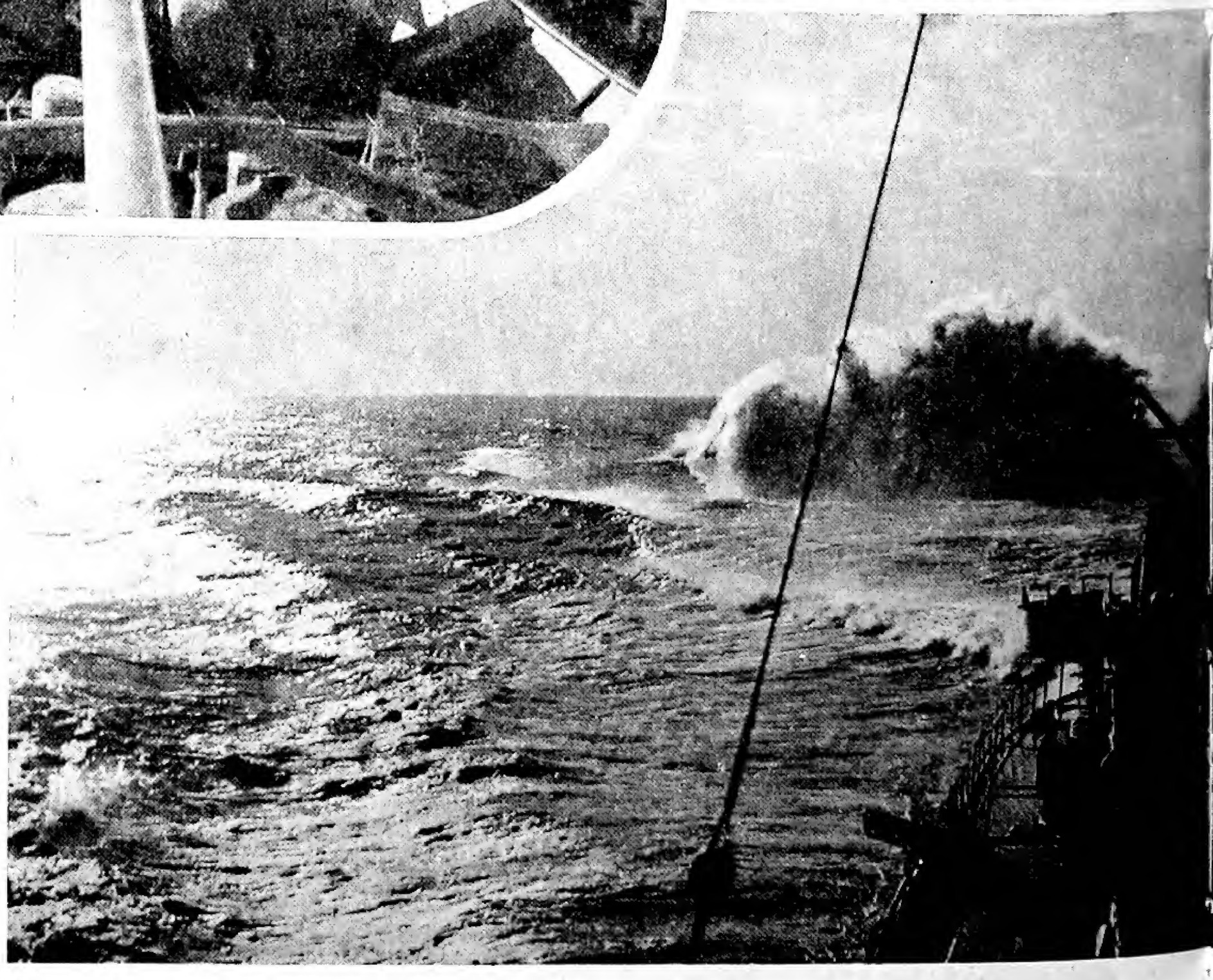
'ARK ROYAL' SEEMED FOR LONG TO BEAR A CHARMED LIFE

Though in the thick of the naval war in the Mediterranean, the aircraft carrier 'Ark Royal' time and again came unscathed through heavy and determined enemy attacks. Above, with bombs bursting in the sea not far astern, she sweeps on majestically. Below, seen from a destroyer, H.M.S. 'Renown' (left) and H.M.S. 'Ramillies' (centre) are on patrol in the Mediterranean.

Photos, British Official; Crown Copyright







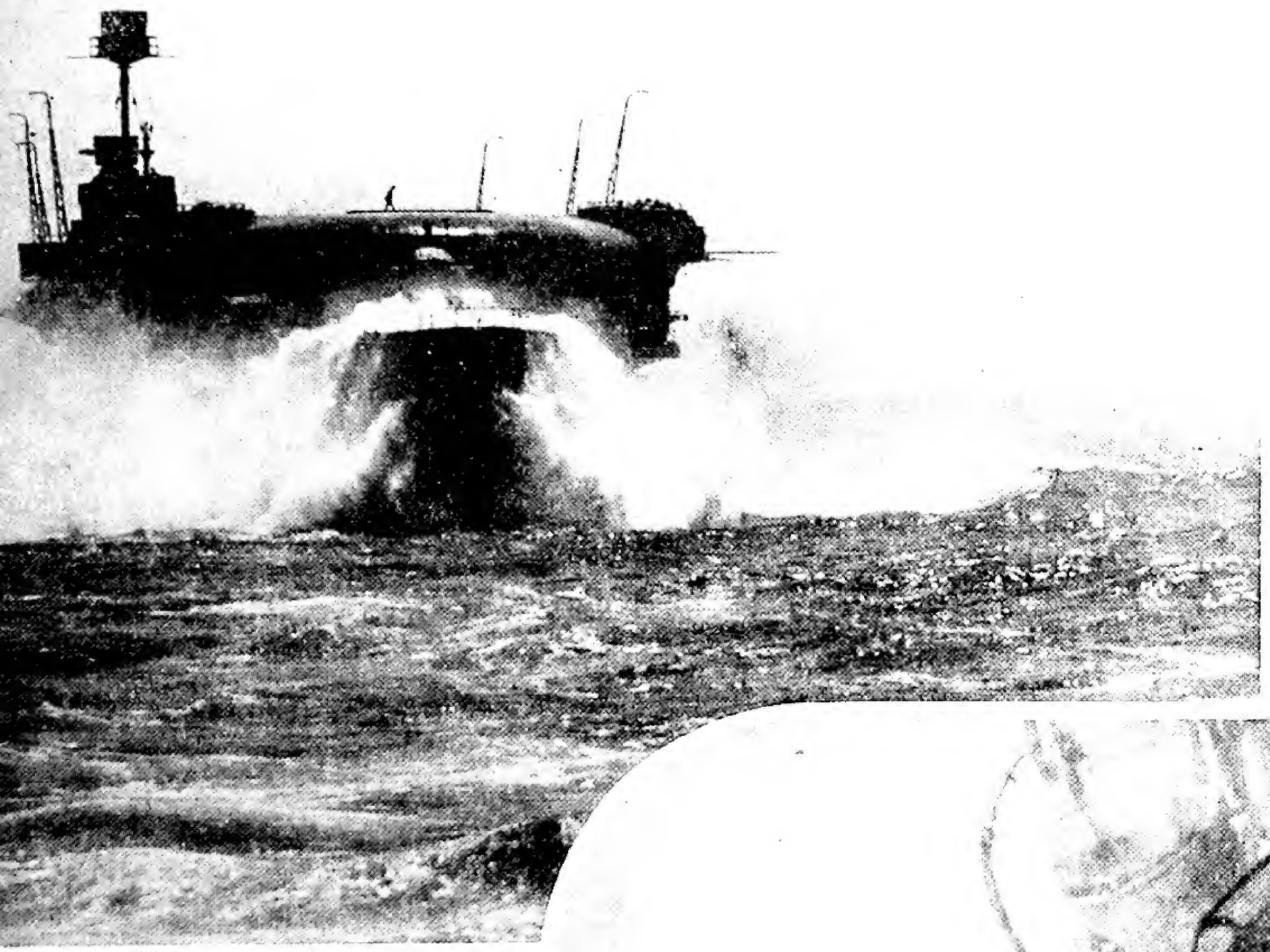
CONVOY ESCORT VESSELS BRAVE ATLANTIC TEMPESTS

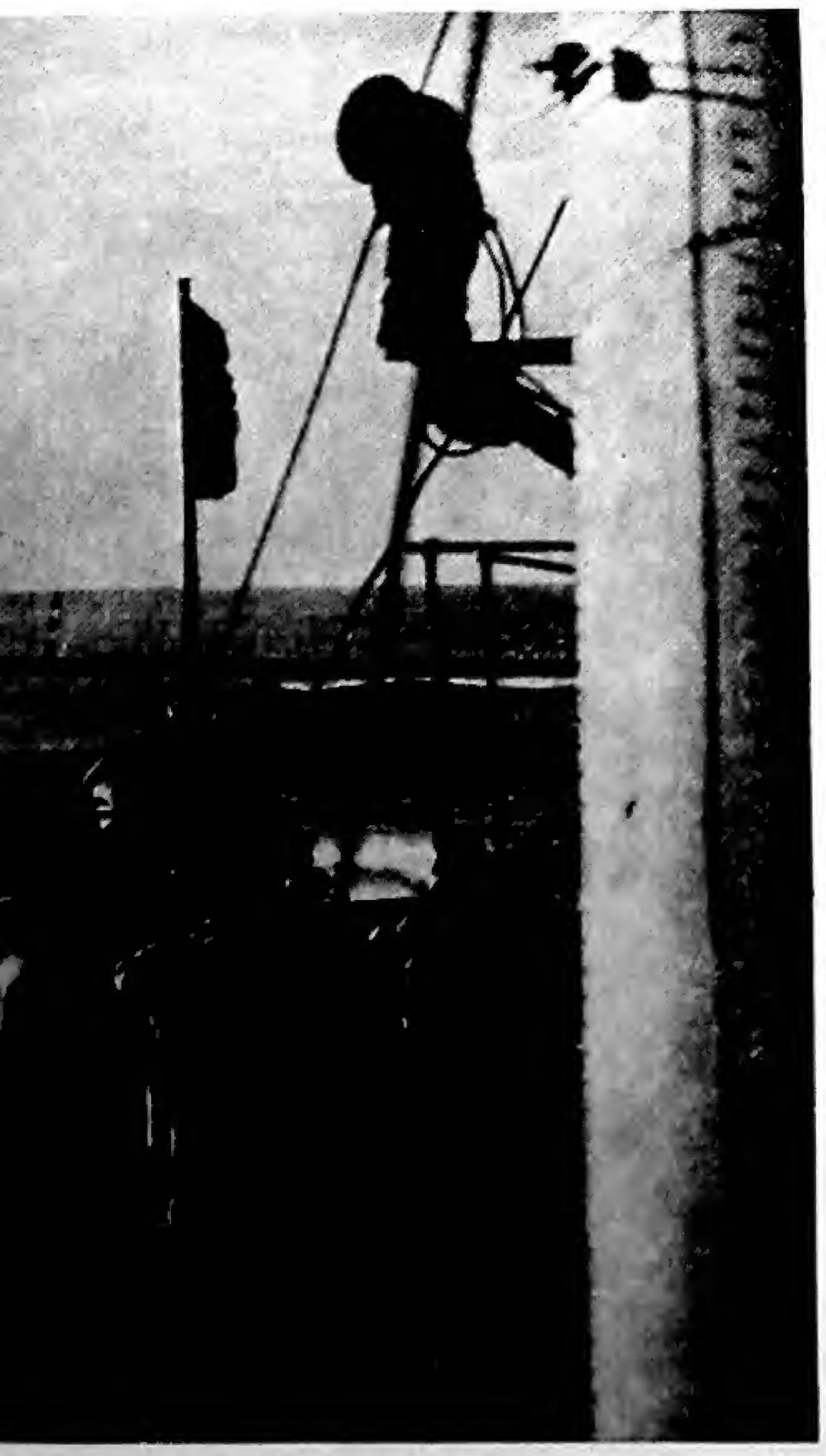
Not only do our destroyers on convoy duty face the constant menace of enemy surface ships and submarines, to say nothing of aerial attack, but they must often carry on through tempestuous seas in gales that frequently reach hurricane strength. At the top, left, a destroyer ploughs on through masses of spray thrown up by her bows. At foot of opposite page (right) is a photograph taken from the crow's-nest of another destroyer as she heels over from the gale, her deck awash.

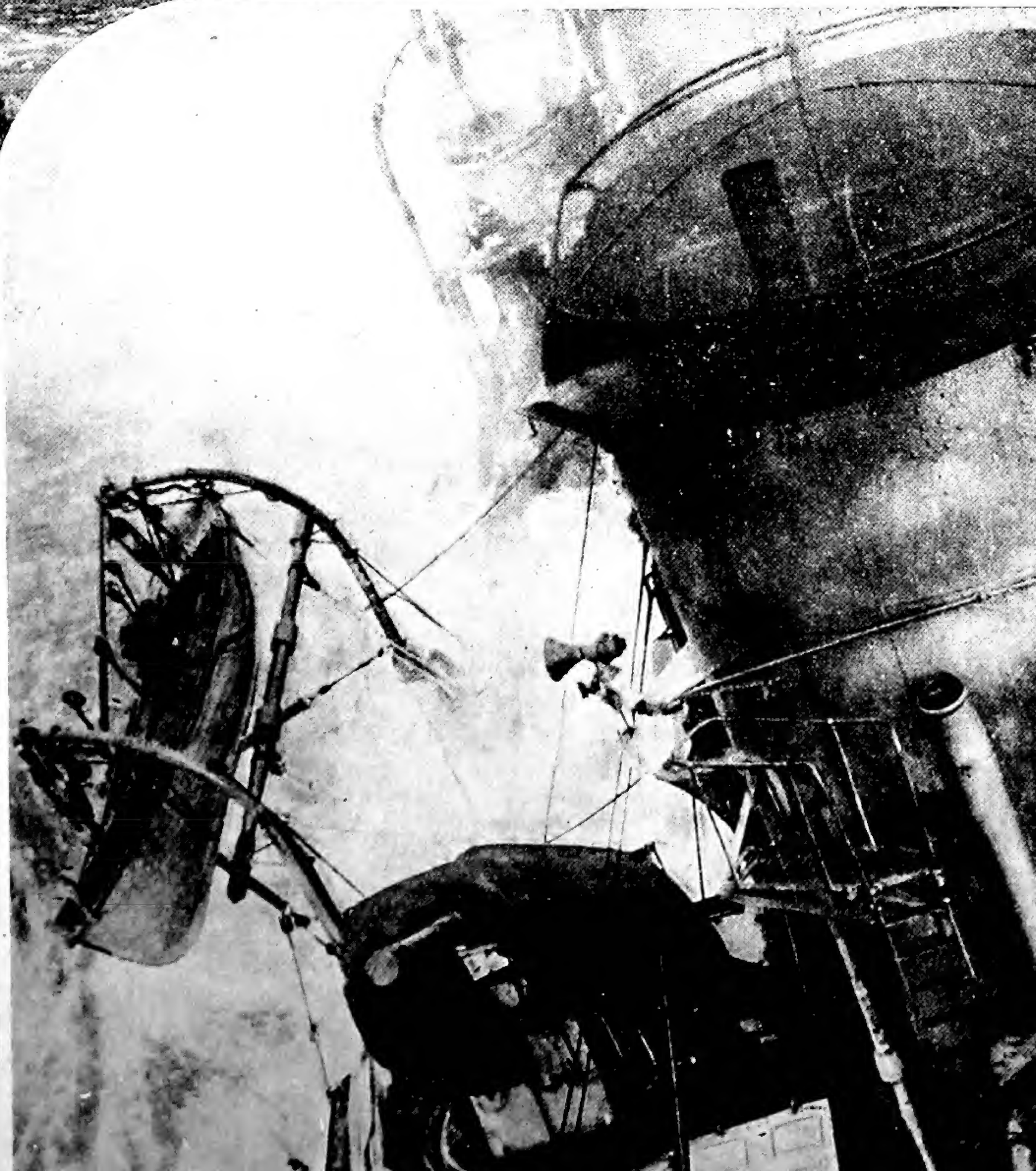
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Associated Press

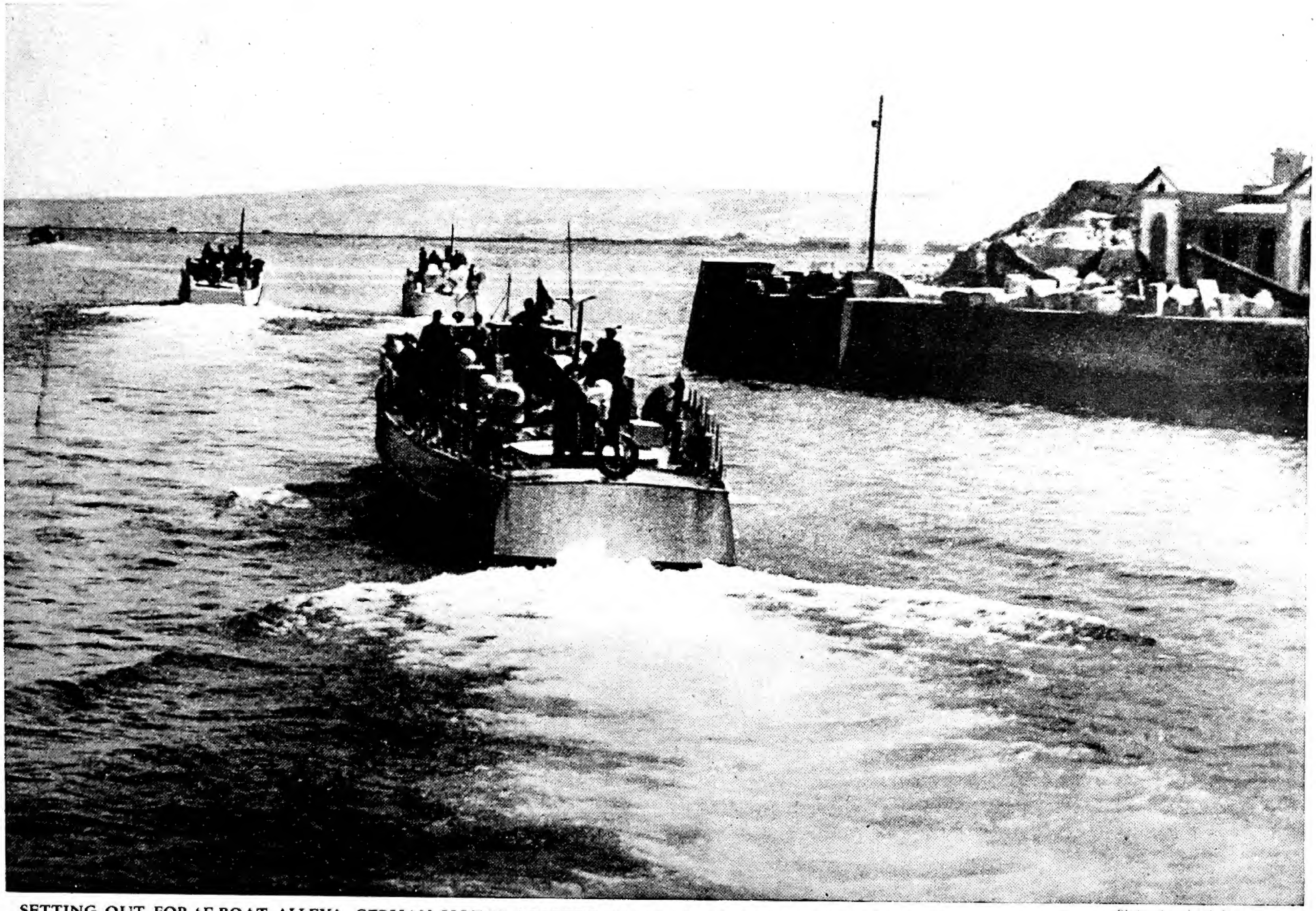
SHIPS OF THE NAVY SWEEP THE MEDITERRANEAN

Aircraft of H.M.S. 'Furious' and other carriers contributed very largely to the success of British Naval operations in Mediterranean waters, both tactically and strategically. Torpedo-carrying aircraft were transported within easy range of their targets and then flew off to strike down Axis warships. 'Furious' (top, right) has a displacement of 22,450 tons and was altered and refitted in 1921–25. (Her badge is shown in p. 1454.) At foot of opposite page is seen the explosion of a depth charge dropped by one of our patrolling warships when attacked by a submarine









SETTING OUT FOR 'E-BOAT ALLEY'—GERMAN MOTOR TORPEDO-BOATS LEAVE FOR A CHANNEL RAID

Photo, Associated Press

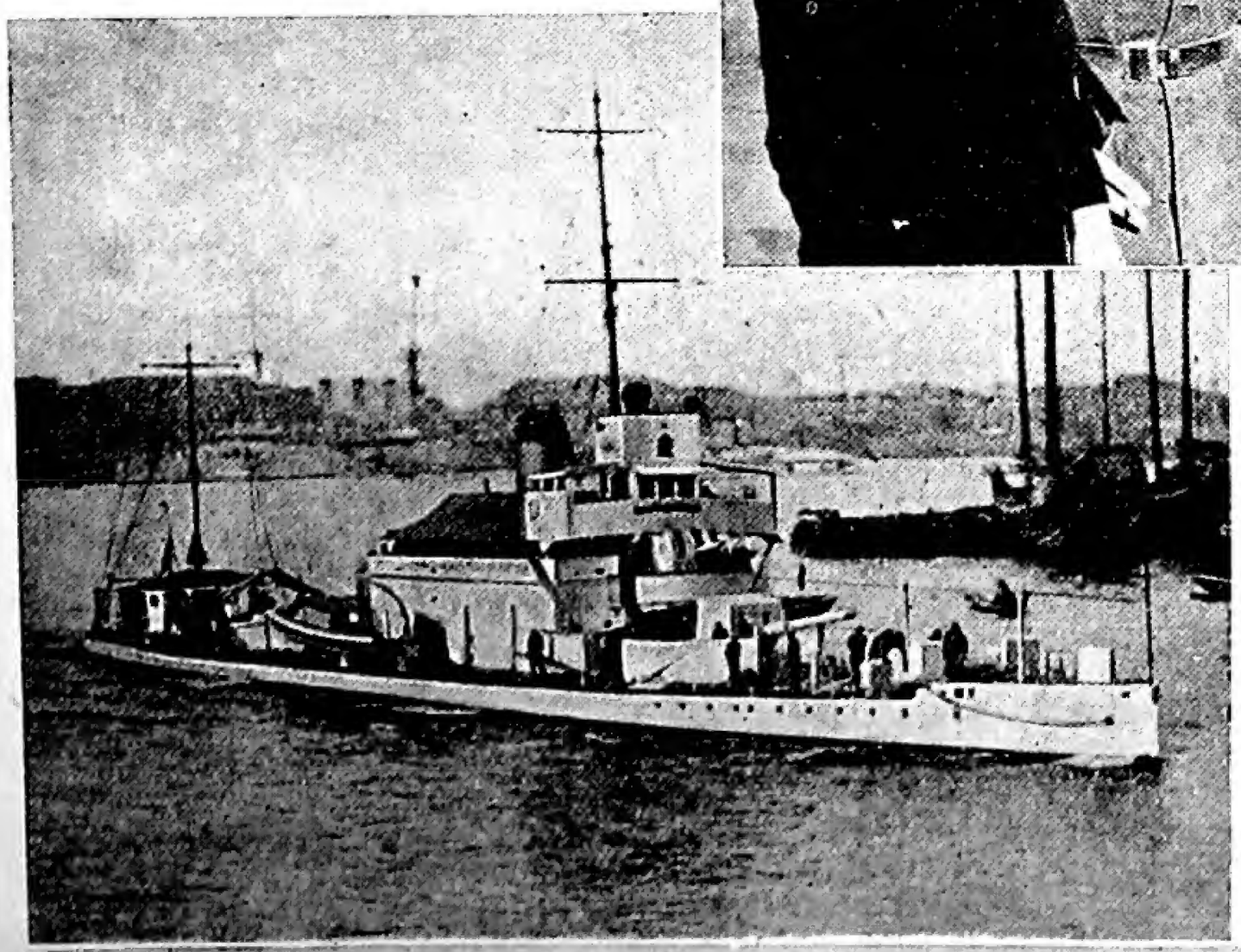
During the closing months of 1940 the German Naval Command made much play with its well-publicized fleet of fast motor torpedo-boats. Based on various ports along the Channel coast, these craft made a feature of sudden night raids in their efforts to harass British shipping. The E-boats certainly complicated the troubles of the Merchant Navy, but they never became a very serious menace. Other illustrations are in p. 1066.

blockade with foodstuffs from North Africa without molestation, Vichy had ordered convoys; but, on the other hand, there were reliable reports later in December that Marshal Pétain had refused German demands to hand over the French Fleet and allow the use of the Mediterranean ports.

In the Pacific and Far East matters were tending to develop, and a good deal of anxiety was caused. On the first of December the Prime Minister greatly reassured many by his definite statement that Singapore would be held at all costs. There were repeated instances of Japan rendering unneutral service to German raiders; many were obviously exaggerated, but the situation was serious. Both Japanese and Chinese ports occupied by the Japanese were used freely, the North German Lloyd liner "Scharnhorst" being openly used as a depot ship at Kobe, and strong diplomatic pressure being successful in only a few cases.

The operations of the Royal Navy and the R.A.N. were hampered because definite news of the raiders' activities came through slowly as a rule; the enemy ships were often able to approach their victim unsuspected until within practically point-blank range and could thus prevent the use of wireless. On December 27 a German auxiliary cruiser with a Japanese name painted on her side and flying the Japanese flag (which she replaced with the swastika before she opened fire) shelled the phosphate island of Nauru at dawn, sinking some of the specially designed steamers and doing some damage to the elaborate plant for loading the ships in deep water. Very strong feeling was aroused in Australia, and it was suggested that their Navy was being sent too far afield. In answer to this Mr. W. M. Hughes pointed out that, while some of the Australian ships had been earning a magnificent





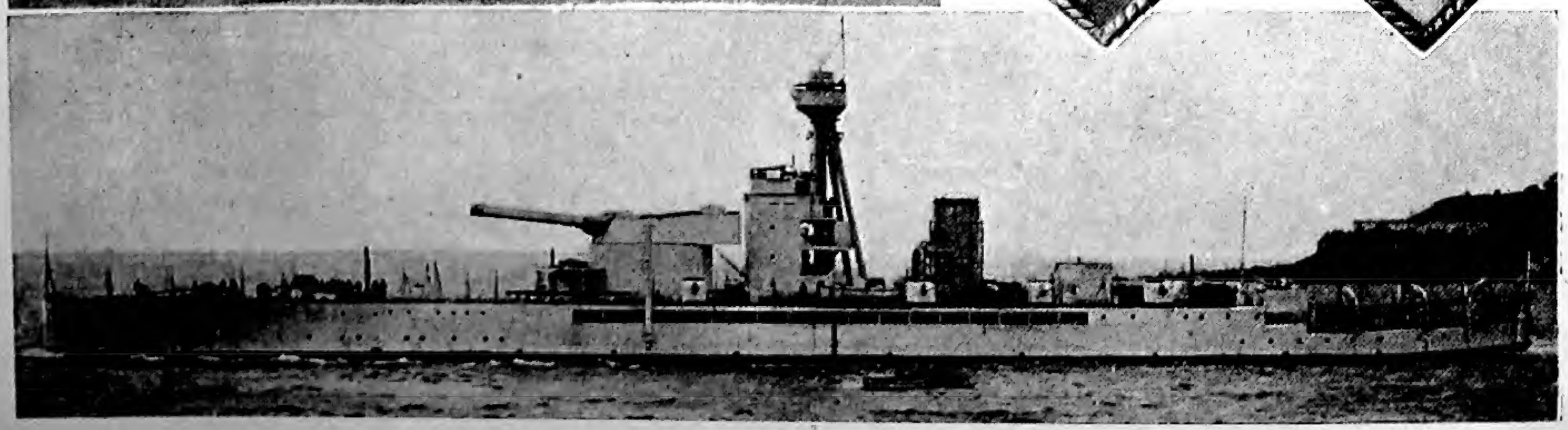
NAVY IN LIBYAN OFFENSIVE

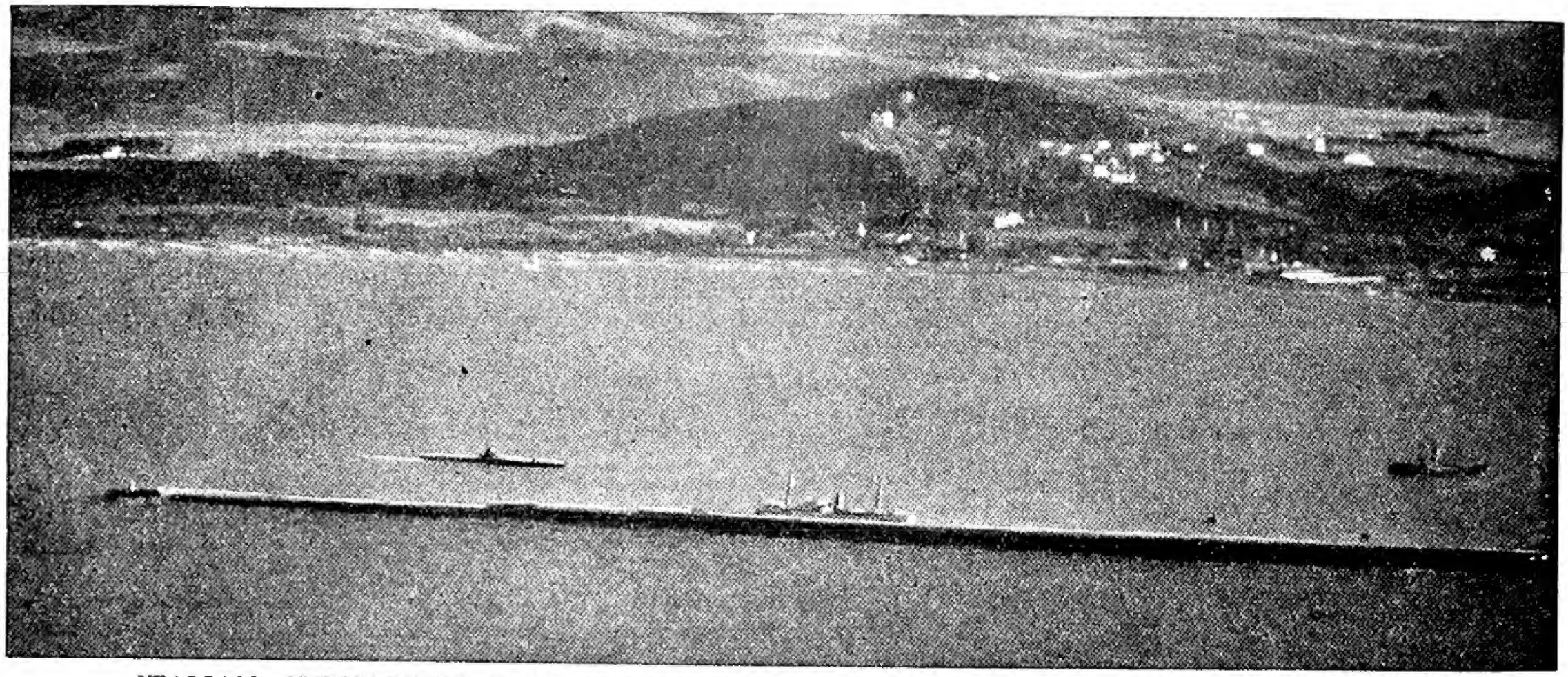
Above, Naval ratings and soldiers discuss the fall of Sidi Barrani, bombarded from the sea on December 8 and 9. Among British warships engaged were the river gunboat 'Ladybird' (left) and the 15-inch-gun monitor 'Terror' (below), which pounded enemy troops retreating along the coastal roads westward.

Photos, British Official; Associated Press; Topical. Badges by permission of H.M. Stationery Office









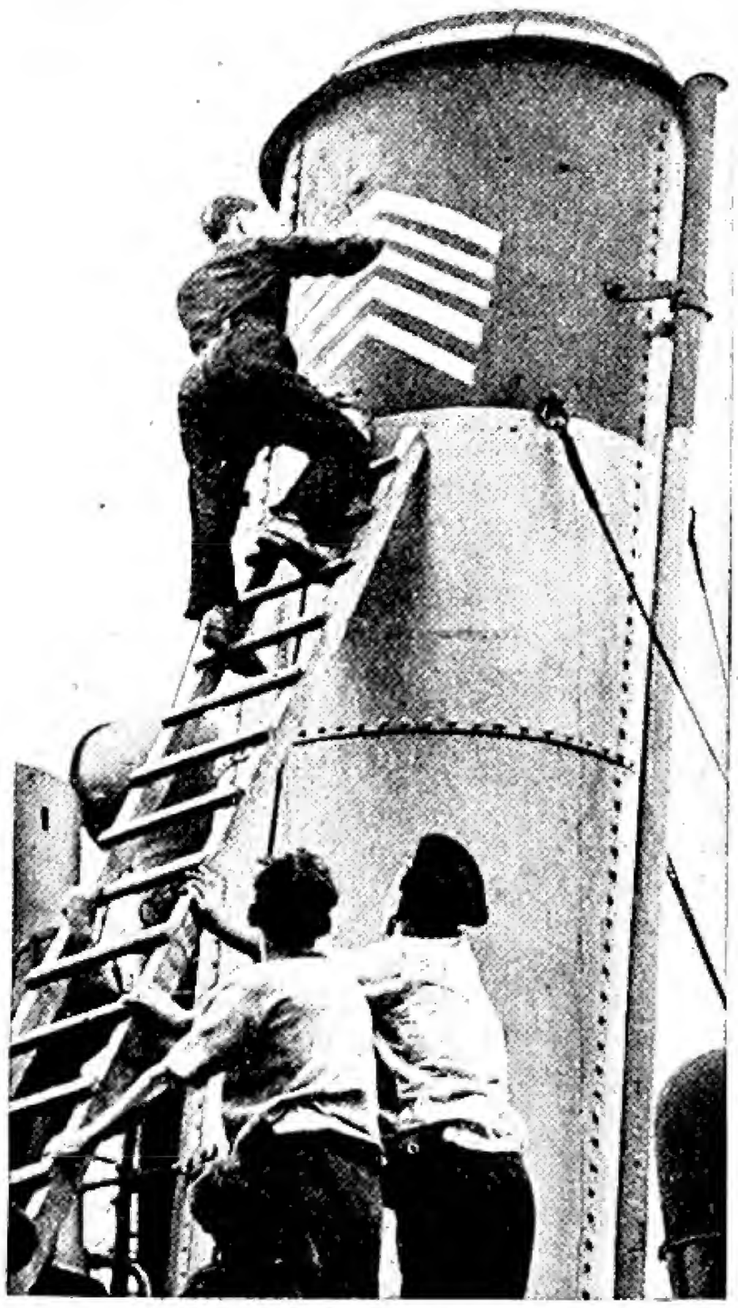
ITALIAN SUBMARINES TAKE REFUGE AT TANGIER

In November, 1940, two Italian submarines which were being hunted by British warships bolted into the Spanish-controlled harbour at Tangier; one is seen sheltering behind the quay. In the early morning of December 13 both slipped out and escaped.

Photo, Associated Press

reputation in the Near Eastern theatre, 90 per cent of the Australian Fleet was in Australian waters.

The month did not pass without casualties, the most important announcement being that H.M. Auxiliary Cruiser "Forfar," normally an Atlantic liner, had been torpedoed and sunk. The destroyer "Sturdy" was wrecked in a gale, and the "Acheron" was sunk. Two submarines were reported overdue, presumed lost: the "Triad" on the 1st and the "Swordfish" on the 22nd. The former had won fame in Norwegian waters, and the latter was one of the earliest of the 640-ton type whose handiness had proved so useful. Trawlers and drifters lost were the "Ethel Taylor," "Amethyst," "Elk," "Calverton" and "Christmas Rose."



'CORDELIA' KEEPS TALLY

The men of the minesweeping trawler 'Cordelia' paint chevrons on the funnel to record the mines they destroy. A fifth is here being painted.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

The enemy exaggerated British losses in his propaganda. On the 3rd the Germans reported that they had just sunk the auxiliary cruiser "Caledonia," although the British had published her loss, under her Naval name of "Scotstoun," in the previous June. Towards the end of the month the Nazis claimed to have recommissioned the ex-British submarine "Seal," whose loss was announced in May, after she had been repaired. (*See* illus. p. 1086.)



CAPTAIN JOACHIM SCHEPKE

The U-boat commander Schepke was said by December, 1940, to have sunk his 40th merchantman. About a year later an official German announcement stated that he had been lost at sea on March 17, 1941.

In the matter of Naval personnel there were several important happenings during December. On the 2nd Vice-Admiral "Jack" Tovey, an old destroyer man and one of the most popular flag officers in the Service, hoisted his flag as Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet. He relieved Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles Forbes and was given the acting rank of Admiral for the appointment, although he was only tenth on the seniority list of vice-admirals. (*See* illus. p. 1224.)

On the 13th quite a sensation was caused by the Admiralty announcing a revolutionary change in the system of promotion to flag rank, which had been the rule since 1718, although there had been many protests against it from the first. "The Admiralty," said the statement, "have decided to widen the field of selection for promotion in order that Captains of outstanding merit may rise to flag rank earlier than is now possible." Under the old rule Captains were promoted to the rank of Rear-Admiral by seniority only, those for whom there was no opening at the time being retired the day after; but under the new scheme Captains were to be selected from the upper five years of the list "without consideration of their place on the list." This, with the system of Acting Rear-Admirals, not only gave the Admiralty the opportunity of promoting younger men who were specially adapted for particular work, but it also avoided the unjust and premature retirement of officers whose only fault was that they were senior to the Captains whom the Admiralty wished at the moment to promote.

Chapter 139

NAZI POLICY IN THE OCCUPIED COUNTRIES: HOLLAND, BELGIUM & CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Closing Months of 1940—Difficulties in Holland—Food Situation—Industries Impressed for War—Verdinaso Movement—Dutch Loyalty—Background in Belgium—King Leopold's Position—Clandestine Patriot Newspapers—Germanization of Czechoslovakia—President Hacha—Czech Exiles, Prisoners and Martyrs—Prague Torture Chamber—Free Czechs in Britain

(*The story of Norway, Denmark and Poland is told in Chapter* 137)

THE fate of the people of Poland, Norway and Denmark under Nazi subjugation is described in Chapter 137. In the present pages the story of other enemy-occupied countries is given. While in Norway during the latter months of 1940 the Germans were considering the abandonment of Quisling and the adoption of more drastic coercion, the Dutch were already the victims of stern repression. All the propaganda of Seyss-Inquart, Austrian Gauleiter of Holland, and of the Dutch quisling Mussert had failed to convince the Dutch of the benefits of "collaboration" with Germany, and therefore a new and more determined effort was made to cow the Netherlands.

Drastic sentences were passed on men, women and even boys convicted or suspected of keeping alive the national Dutch spirit. November 28 saw the closing of the University of Leyden and the dispatch to concentration camps in Germany of professors of the equally well-known Faculty of Laws of the University of Utrecht. In October six Haarlem schoolboys were sentenced by The Hague Military Court to long terms of imprisonment on the charge of damaging electric cables and other property of the German Forces. The Court in Enschede sent to four months' imprisonment a Dutchman accused of calling the Germans "dirty Huns."

Nazi 'Reprisals'

A Dutch workman who came back from Germany and said "No human being can live in Germany" got six months. A photographer was imprisoned for four months for displaying portraits of the Dutch Royal Family in his shop. A manufacturer and his two sons who turned away from a cinema screen when Seyss-Inquart's picture appeared received sentences ranging from two weeks to five months' imprisonment. But these were only a small fraction of the thousands of Dutch subjects imprisoned by the invaders. The Germans arrested many scores as a "reprisal" for the alleged bad treatment of Germans in the Dutch East Indies. Seven workmen accused of hiding British airmen received sentences of from five to eight years.

In many cases the most reliable indications of German difficulties with the Dutch were the Nazis' own decrees. Thus in an effort to stamp out the writing of anti-German slogans on walls



NETHERLANDS FOREIGN MINISTER

After service in the Juridical Section of the Netherlands Foreign Office, Dr. Eelco N. Van Kleffens became assistant director and later director in the Diplomatic Section. He went to Berne as Envoy and Minister in 1939, and later in the same year was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in the reconstructed Netherlands Government in London.

Photo, Bassano

the Dutch were forbidden to carry posters and bill-posting materials between sunset and sunrise. An insidious attempt was made to fix obloquy on Britain. Thus M. Van Kleffens, Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs, stated in London in October that the bombing of Dutch towns by the Germans to give the impression that the R.A.F. were the culprits was absolutely proved.

"We first suspected something like this was afoot when the Germans reported that one or other Dutch town was bombed, while we knew the R.A.F. had not been over there at the time," said M. Van Kleffens. "Then one day in Haarlem a German 'plane was actually seen dropping the bombs. Numerous eye-witness reports have since confirmed the fact. What the Germans do is to send up a bomber every now and then as soon as the siren is sounded, and drop a few bombs on selected areas."

The popularity of the R.A.F. among the Dutch was a sore point with the Germans and the Luftwaffe.

Drastic Curfew

Another revealing German measure was the extension of the curfew, first imposed after the occupation, by two hours, so that it began at 10 p.m. instead of midnight. This followed a number of cases where German soldiers were "accidentally" drowned by falling into canals. The decree also coincided with the almost nightly flights of the R.A.F. over Holland on their way to Germany, and a German military commander said that Holland was "crammed with spies who communicate with British aircraft by signals."

Even if they could have forgotten the organized terror of the invasion, with the merciless bombing of Rotterdam, the Dutch would have had cause enough for discontent. Many houses went into winter unheated, as there was no paraffin for the popular oil stove. Thousands of Dutch children were sent to Austria to be permeated with Nazi ideas, nominally for a holiday. Petrol-driven buses in the streets were replaced by horse-drawn vehicles. The German police chief in the Netherlands issued an order in September banning all motor traffic throughout Holland between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. To prevent daring Dutchmen escaping to Britain he similarly ordered that no civilian was to be allowed on the seashore between sunset and sunrise. No trains ran between 10 p.m. and daybreak.

As the result of new decrees imposing compulsory foreign service, many thousands of Dutch workers were faced with the alternatives of losing unemployment pay and starving in Holland, or working under Nazi taskmasters in Germany. In the first three weeks of October some 40,000 Dutch workers were sent to Germany, many to undertake the

repair of bomb damage. At the end of November they numbered 90,000, of whom 4,000 were in Hamburg.

Popular Dutch leaders were imprisoned. Traitors like E. G. von Bonninghausen, dismissed from the mayoralty of a village by the Dutch Government for disloyal utterances, were promoted to commanding positions in the country; Bonninghausen became burgomaster of Tubbergen, while his brother Ernst, another Nazi, was made burgomaster of Hilversum. With their trade unions dissolved (only 10,000 out of 700,000 Dutch trade unionists could be coerced into Nazi Labour Unions), newspapers suppressed or Nazified, the swastika flaunted everywhere and Nazi field-grey uniforms thick in every community, it would not have been surprising had the Dutch given way to despair. The food situation was acute. Holland, which at one time exported $2\frac{1}{4}$ milliard eggs a year, was rationed to one egg a head a week. Textiles, soap, flour, and even vegetables were severely rationed. The first communal feeding centre was opened in Rotterdam in October. Not an ounce of cheese could be bought in a country which, before the war, had made 124,000 tons annually. Recipes for the preparation of horseflesh were officially broadcast. In place of their famous butter the Dutch were given an artificial product, "Boter-Bindmittel," the main ingredients of which were gelatine and starch. But in the fine country houses of Holland Nazi generals and their staffs lived in luxury. Nazis could gorge themselves to excess in commandeered hotels. The German soldier, sailor, or airman never went short.

More galling still, the Dutch were compelled to manufacture armaments for use against the Allies. The Fokker aircraft works, the Hoogovens and Staalfabrieken (Dutch Steelworks) at Ijmuiden, the great shipyards of Rotterdam, were obliged to work for the Nazis, who seized tank wagons and railcars from the Dutch railways. Dutch building concerns and electric plants were similarly impressed into the service of the Nazi war machine.

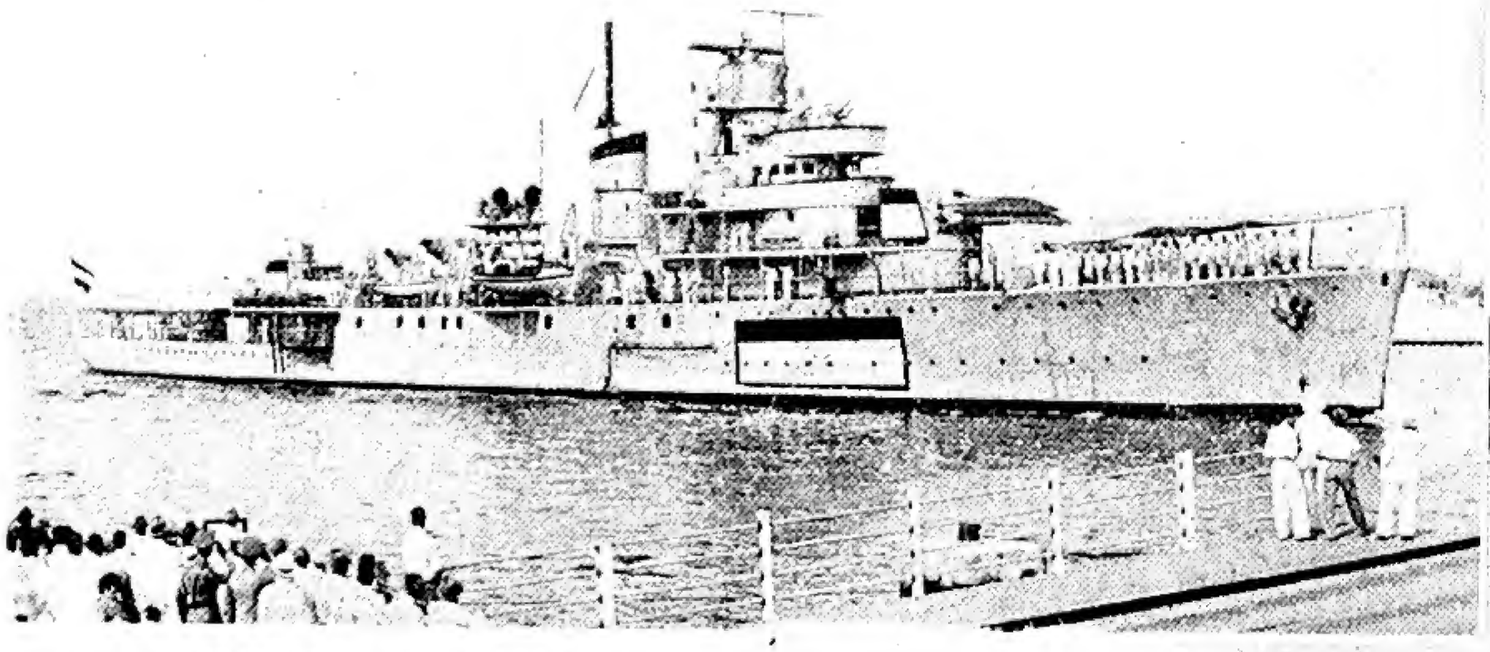
With few exceptions the Dutch maintained their stubborn attitude, despite the manifold trials and privations they had to endure. The much-heralded invasion of Britain, stultified by the Royal Air Force, provided them with many jokes with which to torment their oppressors. Little Dutch boys followed German soldiers about, chanting "Swim, swim!" and making noises

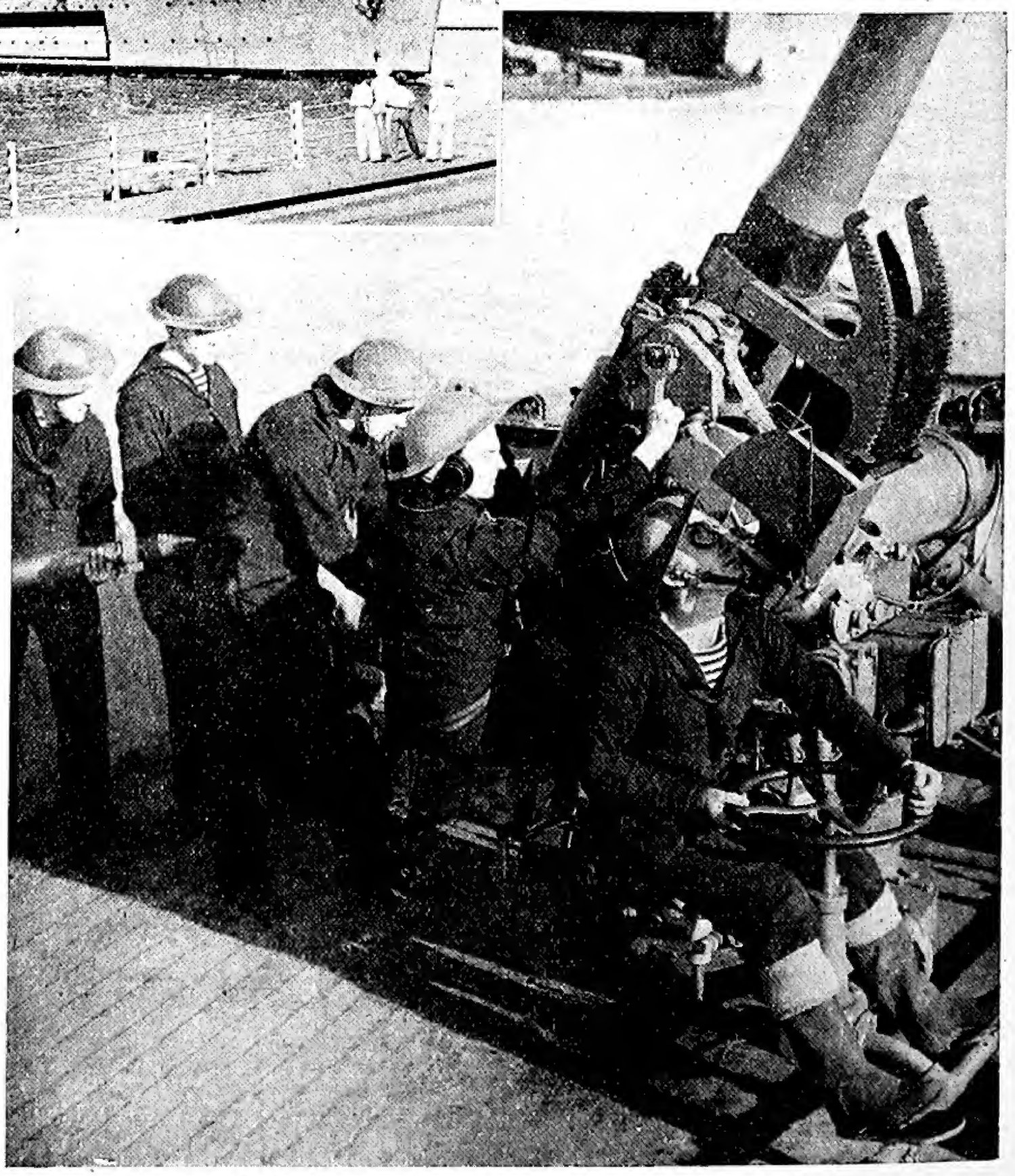


ANTI-NAZI PROPAGANDA

Large numbers of painted handkerchiefs were sold in Holland on St. Nicholas' Day (December 6), 1940—a day for present-giving. The lettering reads: in circle, 'Faithful Unto Death; May 10, 1940' (date of German invasion); across top, 'It is Holland I Love'; beneath, 'If the windmills will only keep turning . . .'

Photo, Wide World





ACTIVITIES OF ROYAL NETHERLANDS NAVY

The gunnery training ship 'Van Kinsbergen' on December 11, 1940, sank the German supply ship 'Rhein' in the Caribbean (see also illus. in p. 1410). Right, an anti-aircraft gun crew aboard a Netherlands gunboat. By the turn of the year this unit had destroyed six enemy bombers.

Photos, Royal Netherlands Navy; G.P.U.

like people drowning. M. Van Kleffens told the following story :

" A Dutch farmer was in a shop waiting to buy something. Behind him were two German soldiers. The shop-girl asked presently who was the next. 'I am next,' said the farmer, 'but these gentlemen have to go to England, and so perhaps they are in a hurry. Please serve them first.' "

When the principal bookseller in The Hague was ordered to remove a small portrait of Queen Wilhelmina, he immediately replaced it by a gigantic photograph of Hitler. Beside it was a book by a famous Dutch swimming teacher, entitled : " How to Swim." Because they were forbidden to own books concerning, or make any reference to, the Royal Family, the Dutch whistled their national anthem in the blacked-out streets.

The Dutch Nazis felt their unpopularity very sorely. One Nazi broadcast from Hilversum tried to encourage " those among us who are hated and despised on every side." Dutch newspapers, run by Nazis, were seldom read. A popular daily lost 100,000 subscribers in three weeks. Seyss-Inquart, Reich Commissioner, admitted in December that German efforts to create a " New Order " had been met in Holland with " reserve and a partial lack of understanding."

Wholesale sabotage was held in check only by the counsels of patience broadcast from the Netherlands Government in London and by the presence in Holland of strong armed forces of the Reich. Nevertheless, rumour ascribed to sabotage the burning of the important De Hook paper mill at Erbeek, and the destruction by fire of a great grain warehouse in Amsterdam and a big works at Helmond—all during the autumn. Rumours, lacking confirmation, that Dutch patriots had enabled the R.A.F. to destroy thousands of Germans while they were at invasion exercises found great credence.

On the high seas the Germans had no more bitter enemies than the Dutch. The veil of secrecy was lifted to announce the capture and destruction in the Caribbean, on December 11, of the German s.s. " Rhein," 6,031 tons, by the Royal Netherlands Navy ship " Van Kinsbergen " (Commander J. L. K. Hoeke). The " Van Kinsbergen "—a lightly armed gunnery training vessel—identified the " Rhein " with the aid of searchlights. The quarry endeavoured to escape, but on being boarded was set on fire by her crew. The Dutch sailors tried for hours to extinguish the flames, but in the end abandoned the attempt and sank the " Rhein " by gunfire. (*See* illus. p. 1410.) The loss of a Dutch submarine, announced in the autumn, drew attention to the important part played by the Netherlands underwater flotilla in the blockade of Germany.



REICH COMMISSIONER, LOCAL 'QUISLING,' AND GESTAPO CHIEF

In the Netherlands this trio was responsible for the Nazification of the people and their harnessing to the German war machine. Left, Seyss-Inquart, Reich Commissioner ; centre, Anton Mussert, Fascist leader ; right, Group-Fuehrer Rauter, who, like Seyss-Inquart, won unenviable notoriety in Austria.

Photos, Wide World ; International Graphic Press



BLACK-OUT DEATH-TRAPS FOR THE NAZIS

Canals in Holland were fenced off, ostensibly to prevent pedestrians falling in during the dark hours. But it would seem probable that arrogant or tipsy Nazi soldiers needed this protection still more, as reports filtered through of many disappearances at night-time, and every now and then bodies were found in the water.

Photo, Sport & General

Britain was as well supplied with tidings from Holland as were the Dutch with news from Britain through Radio Orange, which broadcast speeches and exhortations by Dutch Ministers in London. Cordiality between Britain and Holland was further stimulated when, in September, Professor Gerbrandy, the Dutch Premier, handed a cheque for £50,000 to the London Defence Fund to aid bomb victims. He refuted exaggerated Nazi claims of despair in London.

In November he told his oppressed countrymen :

" The flames of London light up the future of the Netherlands. It is a joy to me to be able to speak to you from the front line. . . Never be guided when building plans for the future by the idea that the Netherlands will have to form part of a Europe ruled by Germans."

In a new effort to overcome both Dutch and Belgian resistance simultaneously, the Germans came out with a further plan. This, the so-called " Verdinaso Movement," ardently pushed by Mussert, provided for (1) the



Nº 9 Avril 1941

LA LIBRE BELGIQUE

NOUVELLE SÉRIE DE GUERRE
FONDÉE LE 15 AOUT 1940

RÉDACTION ET ADMINISTRATION : OBERFELDKOMMANDANTUR, 1, PLACE DU TRONE, BRUXELLES
EDITEUR RESPONSABLE : PETER PAN, JARDIN D'EGMONT, BRUXELLES

Double Mise au Point.

Au moment où les [illegible] ont, au mois de juillet [illegible]

'LA LIBRE BELGIQUE' COMES TO LIFE AGAIN

This famous clandestine news-sheet of 1914-1918 was revived in 1940. A copy of each issue is said to be deposited surreptitiously on the table of the German military commandant, Von Falkenhausen, a circumstance which lends point to the lively jest by which the newspaper gives its editorial and management address as the 'Oberfeldkommandantur, Bruxelles'!

establishment of a Totalitarian Dutch State; (2) the union of the "Dutch People," including the Flemings of Belgium; (3) cooperation of this new State with "blood-related" peoples and, first of all, of course, with Nazi Germany.

The Dutch were to be lured from their loyalty to their Queen by the promise of territorial increases in the shape of Belgian Flanders. The Flemings of Belgium, for their part, were to be seduced by the idea of a united Holland and Flanders, with King Leopold on the throne of the new State. At the same time the Walloons, or French-speaking Belgians, were to be appeased by amalgamation with the racially-related French. The speedy death of this plan was apparent in a brief announcement from Mussert's headquarters at the end of October that the Verdinaso Movement was henceforth merged with the N.S.B. (Dutch Nazi Party).

The loyalty of the oppressed peoples of Norway, Holland and Belgium to their Royal rulers remained a persistent obstacle to collaboration with Germany.

A welcome light was thrown on the facts surrounding King Leopold's capitulation by M. Émile Cammaerts, the famous Belgian poet and professor of London University, in a brochure published in the autumn of 1941. M. Cammaerts revealed that the King remained with his armies, determined to resist to the end, in order to strengthen their morale. Between his two duties as Head of State and C.-in-C. of the Armies, King Leopold chose the latter, refusing to leave Belgium. The King surrendered only when the German break-through at Sedan had made his position impossible. As to the vexed question whether

Light on Leopold's Surrender

Leopold actually warned the Allies of his impending capitulation (M. Reynaud, the French Premier, in his speech of May 28, 1940, had denied that he did so), M. Cammaerts contended that as early as May 25 both London and Paris were notified of the imminent peril of the Belgian Army.

"There is documentary evidence," he added, "that on the 26th, at noon, the head of the French Mission at Belgian H.Q. received a written message warning of the desperate plight in which the Belgians were placed. On the next day . . . King Leopold sent a telegram to the British H.Q. and the representative of General Weygand saying that 'the limits of exhaustion have very nearly been reached.' When the fateful decision was at last taken on the afternoon of the 27th, it was at once communicated to the chiefs of the British and French Missions."

It is possible, of course, that, owing to chaos and accidents in the Allied communications, the message failed to reach the French High Command.

Sir Roger Keyes, who was attached to the British Mission at Leopold's headquarters, also made a statement rehabilitating the King. Speaking at the Dorchester Hotel in London on October 3, 1940, he said:

"The Belgian people were loyal and devoted to King Leopold, of whom many poisonous lies have been spoken. In May, 1940, I was with the King until 10 o'clock on the night when the appeal was made to the Germans for an armistice. That the King intended to make the appeal had been known to the British and French Governments by 5 o'clock that afternoon. The Belgians had fought a campaign of heartbreaking retirements due to the collapse of the French at Sedan and on the Meuse. King Leopold knew that to go on only meant a useless slaughter of more of his people. . . ."

Sir Roger said that when he went back after the capitulation with the British Government's offer of asylum to Leopold and his mother, he found Queen Elisabeth helping to nurse the wounded. With bombs falling near her, her reply was: "What, leave now? Why, the people want us more than ever." The broadcasting of these statements to the Belgium people in the autumn did much to strengthen the ties of loyalty between them and the King, to whom the majority was strongly attached, and hampered still further the Germans' efforts at intimidation.

The position of the Belgian Government in London was clarified by M. de Vleeschauwer, Minister for Colonies, on September 3. He said:

"Unlike France, Belgium has concluded no armistice with Germany. Our King, who personally led the army throughout the fighting and who wished to share its fate, was made a prisoner with his soldiers when



ONDERRICHTINGEN

De rantsoeneeringskaart is strikt individueel en persoonlijk. Zij is alléén geldig als zij samen gaat met de eenzelvigheidskaart en, voor de personen van min dan 16 jaar, als zij samengaat met de eenzelvigheidskaart van de persoon die met de hoede van het kind belast is.

Het verlies van de kaart moet onmiddellijk aangegeven worden aan de Gemeentelijke of Intercommunale Steun- en Ravitailleeringsdienst. Zij wordt vervangen tegen betaling. Ieder misbruik, vervalsching of namaak der kaarten wordt bestraft.

De rantsoeneeringszegels worden afgeleverd door de Gemeentelijke of Intercommunale Steun- en Ravitailleeringsdienst van het gebied waar de titularis gevestigd is of zijn gewoon verblijf heeft, op overleggen:

1° van de rantsoeneeringskaart;

2° van de eenzelvigheidskaart.

Iedere wijziging van domicilie of van gewoon verblijf dient aan de Gemeentelijke of Intercommunale Steun- en Ravitailleeringsdienst aangegeven.

Bij de aankoop van een rantsoen der aan rantsoeneering onderworpen produkten moet de overeenstemmende rantsoeneeringszegel aan den verkooper afgegeven.

Verloren rantsoeneeringszegels worden niet vervangen.

De namaak of vervalsching van rantsoeneeringszegels wordt bestraft.

KONINKRIJK BELGIË

DEPARTEMENT VAN STEUN EN RAVITAILLEERING VOOR DE BURGERLIJKE BEVOLKING

Rantsoeneeringskaart

BELGIUM RATIONED FOODSTUFFS BEFORE THE INVASION

Here is a ration card issued in Antwerp in 1940. Owing to shortage of food a complete rationing scheme had been set in motion shortly before the German onslaught, and the Nazis continued it, reducing the quantities allowed.

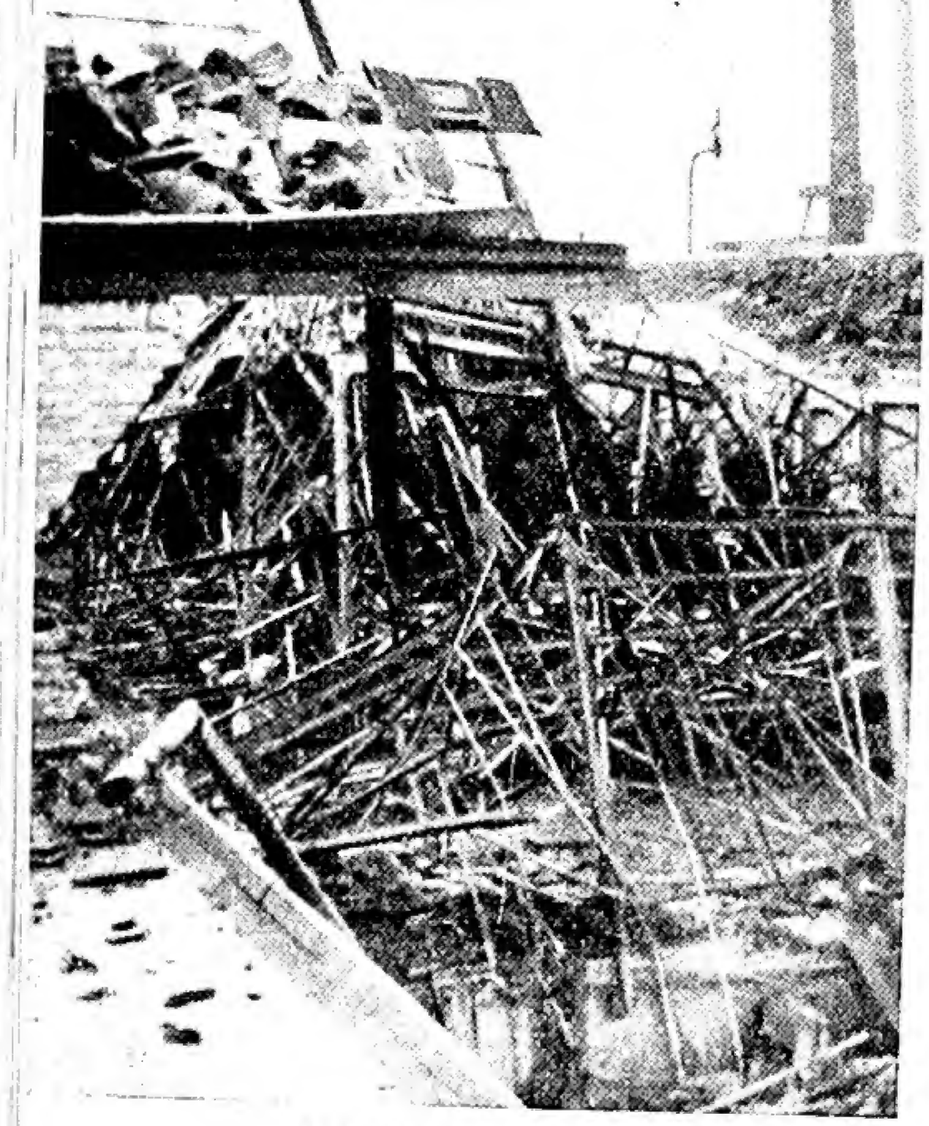
From "Under the Iron Heel," by Lars Moen (Robt. Hale, Ltd.)



BELGIUM UNDER GERMAN RULE

Top, one of the first things the conquerors did was to install temporary telephone lines, mainly outside buildings. These were frequently sabotaged. In Belgium the shops of Jews were branded (centre). Nazi police collected fines on the spot from errant lorry or car drivers (below, left). In Brussels a 'German Front Library' was instituted (right).

Photos above and below, from "Under the Iron Heel," by Lars Moen (Robt. Hale, Ltd.); on left, Sport & General



TRAIL OF THE BRITISH BOMBER

This photograph, taken after an R.A.F. raid, shows damage done to a foundry and engineering shop in the Rue de Birmingham, Brussels, where war work for the Nazis was being executed.

Photo, Inbel

they surrendered on May 28. He still conducts himself as a prisoner. . . . Our constitution very wisely anticipated the possibility if the King should be unable to reign, and in that eventuality it entrusts the full Royal Power to the Ministers assembled in Council."

With the position of the King and of the Belgian Government in exile thus honourably defined, the Germans made scant headway with their allegations of "cowardly ministers who fled from disaster." The Belgian spirit became very intransigent towards the conquerors. Sabotage became ever more frequent in spite of increasingly severe penalties. In September the Brussels wireless announced a large fire in the rubber factory near Schaerbeek, and stated that German army cables had been damaged and hayfields burned in Liége. Damage in Liége was estimated by the Germans at 100,000 francs, and collective penalties were imposed upon the inhabitants of neighbouring villages. In October the Germans, exasperated by escapes of British soldiers, gave warning of severer penalties for Belgians who failed to inform about British suspects. During the same period shots were fired at German soldiers in the districts of Diegheim and Saventheim, north of Brussels.

The Gestapo exploited every weakness of human nature in order to divide and subjugate the Belgian nation. In view of increasing sabotage the Belgians were reminded that prisoners of war had been released only "because of the Fuehrer's clemency."

Of the remaining prisoners the Flemings would be released before Walloons. This was deliberately done to accentuate suspicion and mistrust due to racial differences. Belgians were forbidden to hoist the national flag or to hold any demonstration on November 15, the King's patronal day. The Nazis appointed a German commissioner to collaborate with the rector of Brussels University, thus trying to avoid the loss of prestige which would follow complete closure of that famous institution. M. Rens, General Secretary of the Belgian Federation of Labour, said in New York in December that 250 Belgian trade union leaders had been arrested for sabotage during the preceding three weeks in the province of Antwerp alone.

Gestapo in Belgium

In Antwerp the Nazis ordered all Jews to wear the Star of David, and in response almost the whole population thronged the streets with the star embroidered on their clothes.

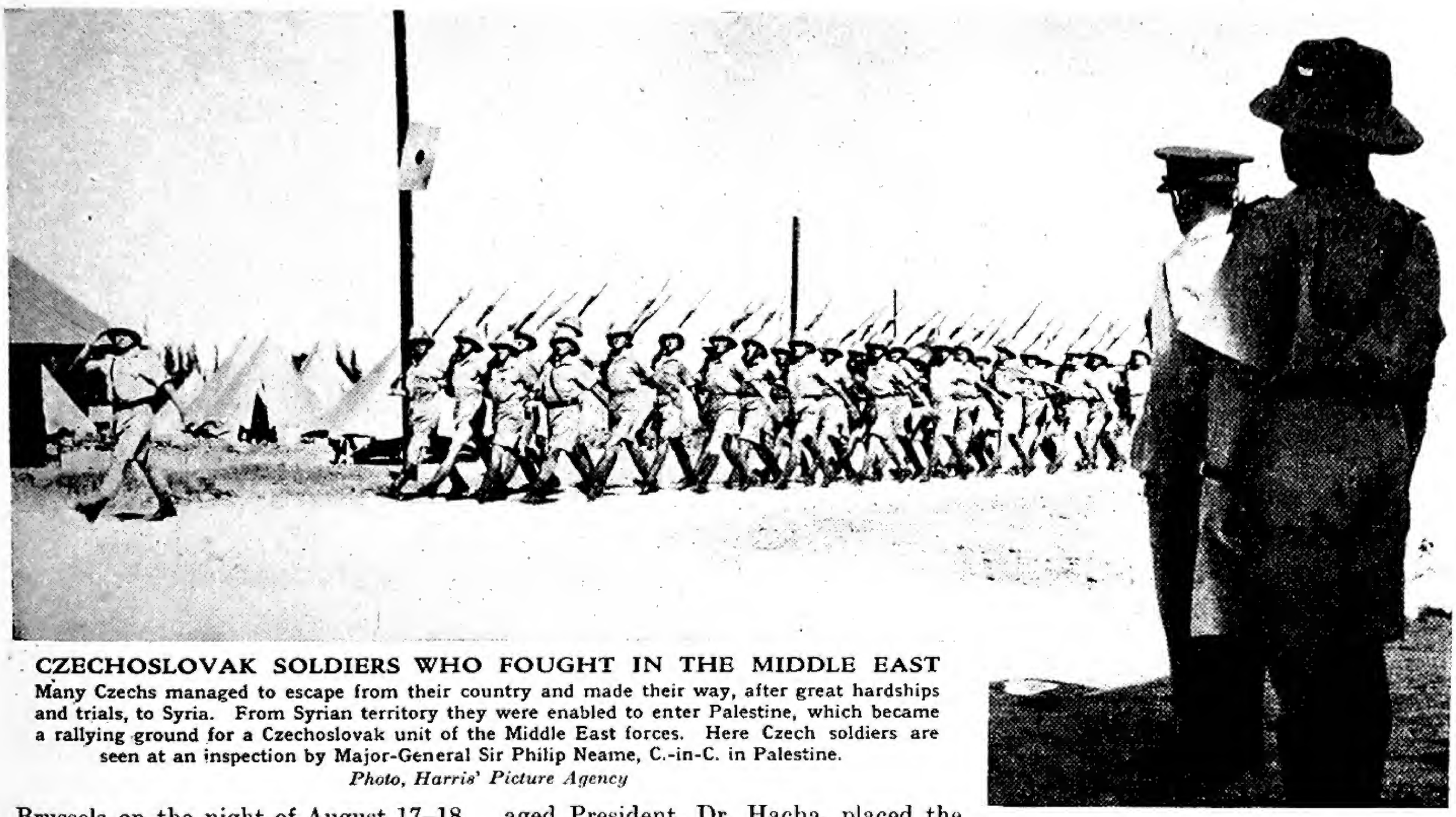
Secretly printed newspapers and hand produced broadsheets began to make their appearance. "La Libre Belgique," successor of a similarly-named paper which circulated surreptitiously in Belgium during 1915–18 and ran to 171 issues in all, was again passed from hand to hand: one of its earliest issues announced that the Germans and not the R.A.F. had bombed



R.A.F. RAIDS KEPT NAZIS ON TENTERHOOKS

A vigil that could never be relaxed was imposed upon the Germans in Flanders by daily British air raids on military objectives. Above, a machine-gun patrol on a canal barge in Flanders; left, a turret gun on the coast—one of many that were constantly manned.

Photos, Associated Press; Keystone



CZECHOSLOVAK SOLDIERS WHO FOUGHT IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Many Czechs managed to escape from their country and made their way, after great hardships and trials, to Syria. From Syrian territory they were enabled to enter Palestine, which became a rallying ground for a Czechoslovak unit of the Middle East forces. Here Czech soldiers are seen at an inspection by Major-General Sir Philip Neame, C.-in-C. in Palestine.

Photo, Harris' Picture Agency

Brussels on the night of August 17–18. As regards food and fuel the Belgians were no better off than the Dutch. The scarcity of paraffin, coal and timber meant a shivering winter. Prices of commodities trebled. In addition to the Army of Occupation, 2,000,000 Belgians repatriated from France had come to share the food supplies.

The Germans made great progress with the reconstruction of Belgian canals and damaged buildings. Out of 2,660 communes 1,800 had suffered damage during the invasion. At the end of December it was reliably estimated that, following the defeat of the German Air Force in the Battle of Britain, 90 per cent of the Belgian people still hoped for and believed in an ultimate Allied victory.

Czechoslovakia's ordeal under German rule was no less bitter than that of Holland or Belgium, as already recounted, but the outline must be given in order that the full implications of the Nazi " New Order " may be realized. Czechoslovakia, it should be noted, was not a German military conquest. Following the Munich Agreement, Mr. Winston Churchill said in the House of Commons on October 5, 1938 :

" All is over. Silent, mournful, abandoned, broken, Czechoslovakia recedes into the darkness. . . . I venture to think that in future the Czechoslovak State cannot be maintained as an independent entity."

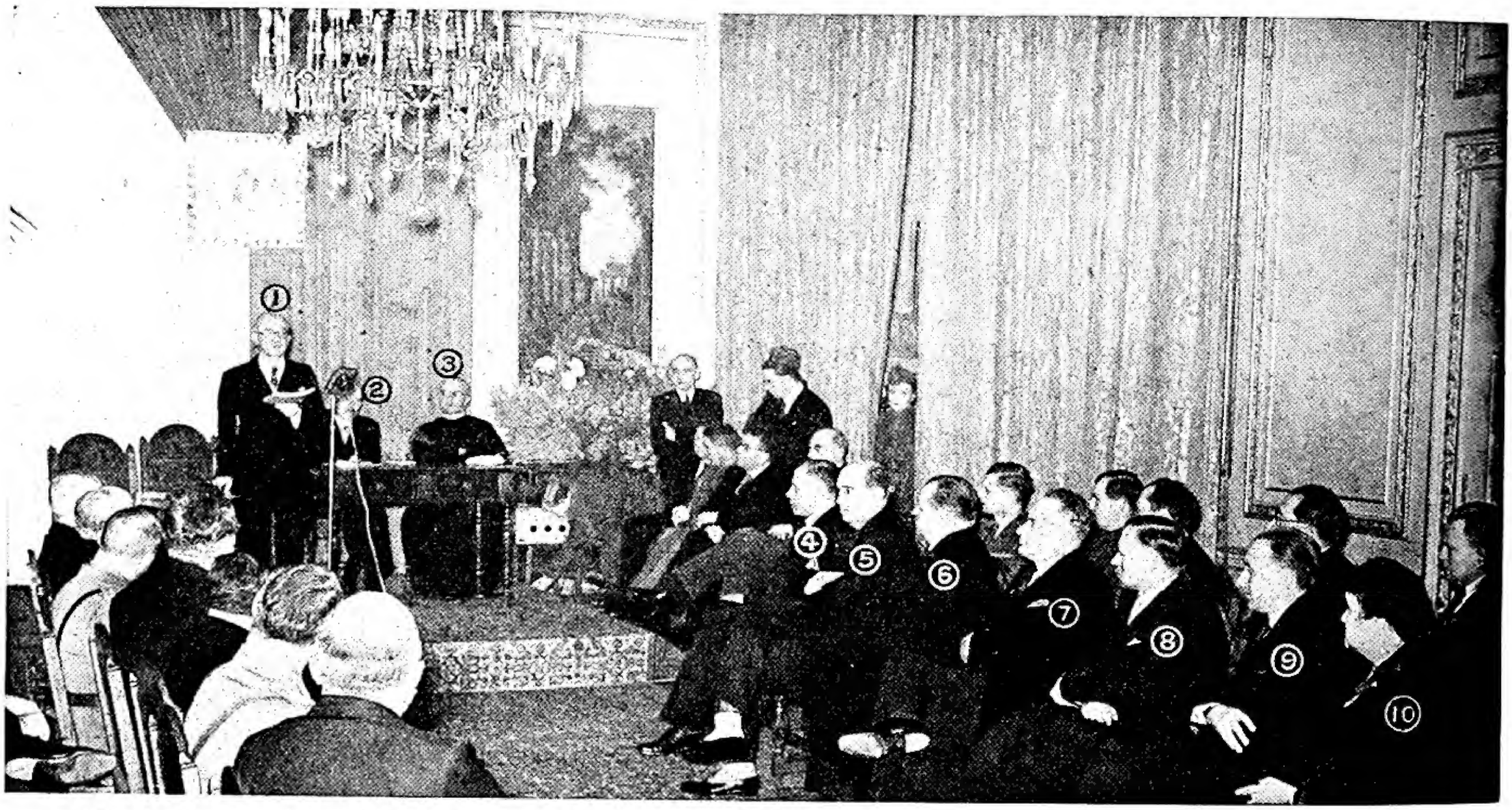
This unhappy prediction was correct. Fair words were spoken at first. The aged President, Dr. Hacha, placed the destiny of the Czech people " with confidence in the hands of the Fuehrer"; Hitler, when his troops on March 15, 1939, seized what remained of the Republic, expressed his " determination to guarantee the Czech people an autonomous development of its national life in accordance with its particular characteristics." But the Czech people soon learnt the fate designed for them by the Nazis.

By December, 1940, Czechoslovakia had experienced 21 months of this " autonomous development." Let us see what it had implied. President Hacha needed every day the permission of a subordinate German officer to enter and leave his official residence. Every Czech of note was an exile, or a prisoner in a concentration camp, or dead. Czech military officers were specially persecuted : among other martyrs may be mentioned Bohumil Klein, Military Attaché in Budapest ; Lieut.-Colonel Tomas Houska, who threw himself out of a fourth-floor window after four days of Gestapo torture ; Colonel Josef Moravek, Brigadier-General Karel Klubal, Lieut.-Colonel Jan Trbizky, Lieut.-Colonel Ludvik Musilek, and Major Jaroslav Rysavy—tortured to death either for refusing to reveal the whereabouts of Czech army petrol dumps or for allegedly maintaining relations with foreign Powers. By December, 1940, the following politicians were known to be in concentration camps or to have died : Soukup, former President of the Senate ; Senator Johanis, and Kellner, the former vice-mayor of Prague (who both committed suicide) ; Minister Franke, Minister Zadina ; Deputies Dolansky, Suchy, Rasin, Remes, Dlouhy, Tymes, Langer, and scores of others.

The Czech cooperative movement, famous for its efficiency, was broken up by the Germans, who controlled the supply of raw materials and disposed of its products. Czech citizens, farmers and municipalities had been forced under threats of violence to part with property at ridiculously low figures to German business men. For instance, a German would offer 100,000 crowns for a building worth 1,000,000, and the Czech owner would be tortured until he gave his " consent." Then the German would pay only 10,000 crowns and the Czech owner would again be arrested and tortured until he signed a declaration that he had no further financial claims on the German.

Plunder of Czech Property

As if this were not enough, the Germans, on October 1, 1940, introduced a Customs Union between the Protectorate and Germany, and whatever remnants of the promised autonomy remained were swept away. Henceforth the farce of obtaining Czech legal sanction for the disguised confiscation of Czech property was not necessary. The Czech puppet government could no longer influence its own economic policy. " Made in Germany " appeared on all Czech goods. Only



FIRST STAGE IN THE REHABILITATION OF THE CZECHS

On October 25, 1940, a military agreement was concluded between Great Britain and the Czech Provisional Government in London. Below, Lord Halifax and (right) M. Jan Masaryk are seen signing the pact. Top, first meeting of the Czech National Council, on December 11, 1940 : 1, Dr. Benes, Premier ; 2, M. Bechyn, President of Council ; 3, Pastor Machacek, Vice-President ; 4, M. Stransky ; 5, M. Masaryk ; 6, M. Kalbvoda ; 7, M. Osusky ; 8, M. Slavik ; 9, M. Fierabend ; 10, Mme. Jurneckova.

Photos, Wide World ; Associated Press



those industries were allowed to exist which served the Reich.

Germany did not desire to destroy the Czechs, for they were far too valuable as mechanics and farmers to be slaughtered wholesale at a time when the Nazi war machine was making ever greater demands on industry and agriculture. Her aim was to maintain the Czechs as slaves of the Reich—without property, without education, with few human rights. " The Czech people have nothing to do except work and produce children," said Baron von Neurath's paper, " Der Neue Tag."

At the end of 1940 all Czech schools in territory severed from the Republic after the Munich Agreement (the Sudeten and other districts) before Hitler finally took over the remainder of Czechoslovakia, were closed. About 800,000 Czech children were thereby deprived of the opportunity of learning their mother tongue. The building of new Czech schools was banned ; 6,000 out of 20,000 Czech elementary school teachers were out of work. No heating was allowed during the winter in Czech schools which remained.

Czech Universities Suppressed

On October 23 the final blow to higher education was given when the academic bodies of the closed and pillaged Czech Universities and Polytechnic schools were abolished. The Deans were dismissed, the remaining property of the schools seized, and the Universities ceased to exist even in name. At the same time the State Health Institute, the most successful of its kind in Europe, was handed over to Germany. When a Czech delegation asked the cynical Governor, Frank, to leave the schools open, he replied : " If England wins the war, you will open them yourselves. If Germany wins, an elementary school with five classes will be enough for you."

The Nazis used various methods to Germanize Czechoslovakia. The German tongue had preference over Czech, and Czech could be used only in subsidiary documents. Germans could not be tried by Czech courts. Many Czech municipalities and undertakings had to employ Germans as translators for their official documents. Germans were appointed to administer Czech towns,

and of fourteen departmental chiefs in the Prague Municipality only four were Czechs, who received half the salary of a German in a corresponding position.

Czech street and place names were Germanized. "Aryanization" was a ready-made pretext for transferring property owned by Czechs to German hands without payment, and many well-known Prague cinemas and Czech workers' institutes were thus taken over. The colonization of Czech land by Germans was often solved by the simple expedient of sending two Gestapo men to the village registry offices and there forcing the Czech clerk at revolver point to cancel in red ink the names of Czech property owners and to insert those of Germans. The Czech population was then expelled.

A new wave of religious persecution opened with the Battle of Britain. Monasteries, convents and religious foundations were seized, and monks and nuns were driven from secular hospitals. At the beginning of September, 1940, all the Catholic associations throughout the country were dissolved. Protestant churches suffered similar persecution.

A Gestapo centre was installed in the palace of the banker Petschek in Prague,

Prague Torture Chamber

and the building was transformed into a torture chamber. Bodies of the dead or half-dead were loaded at its doors into carts and taken for cremation or to concentration camps. It was estimated that 100,000 Czechs were under arrest at the end of 1940. Deportations of Czechs to forced labour in German factories was offset by the import of Germans into the Protectorate.

Rising prices, scarcity of food, forced labour, concentration camps, beggary—these were the burdens of the Czechs. But the Czech spirit was far from despairing. Britain remained unconquered; Greece was making a brave stand against Italy; General Wavell's offensive in Egypt was making good progress. The exhortations to courage and patience broadcast nightly in Czech from London were so effective that the German-controlled Prague and Melnik radio stations were forced to devote a large part of their programmes to counteracting the work of the Czech Provisional Government.

The Czechs knew they were keeping in the Protectorate 250,000 German soldiers, men who might otherwise be used on active fronts. Czech workers, by their ca'canny and go-slow methods, forced the withdrawal from production of many skilled German artisans, who were henceforth employed in inspecting minutely each finished component made by Czechs. The harsher the Nazi oppression, the fiercer became the determination of the Czechs. As one workman said: "When life is made so miserable for us, death loses its terrors."

Czechs who evaded the Gestapo and succeeded in reaching Palestine brought valuable information of German armaments in course of manufacture. Nothing could be kept secret in a land in which a Gestapo official complained: "There were 10,000,000 spies." Reliable information reaching the Czech Government in London told of organized sabotage in Czech factories, particularly in those working on munitions. One Czech who reached London said:

> "Many people have been punished for sabotage, but the movement is too widespread to be suppressed. The quality and output there have been lowered to a marked degree. If you ask me where is our Mafia, or secret organization behind the sabotage, I can tell you that our Mafia is now the whole nation."

Hundreds of groups were organized for civil resistance. The Czech Government in London received information regularly about the main munitions centres and important factories, sometimes with invitations for the R.A.F. to bomb them.

Meanwhile, the Czech Provisional Government continued its work of consolidating Czech resources all over the world for the struggle against Hitler. The 1,500,000 Czechs overseas, chiefly in the United States and Canada, were a valuable propaganda weapon, and in the United States they formed a special organization. On October 27, eve of the Czechoslovak national festival, Britain concluded an agreement whereby the Czech armed forces were to form an independent administrative unit under their own Czech officers. The Army was distributed partly in training camps in Great Britain and partly in the Middle East (including a company of volunteers in Shanghai). Czech pilots, in the first independent Czechoslovak Bomber Squadron, took an active role in bombing Germany from September 10 onwards.

At the end of December, 1940, the phase of apathy and despair which had followed immediately on the German occupation and the collapse of France was passing. Britain's resistance inspired belief in an ultimate British victory. In all occupied countries sabotage and passive resistance were on the increase. But living conditions for the oppressed people were going from bad to worse. At the same time, in spite of sabotage, go-slow tactics and such resistance as was practicable, Germany's productive capacity was steadily expanding as she incorporated the resources of the conquered countries into her already tremendous war industries. In all the oppressed countries there were secret and "underground" movements for organized revolt when this should be feasible, but at this period it was plain that a drastic improvement in the Allies' military position would be necessary before any coordinated move could be successfully attempted.

CZECH UNITS IN THE R.A.F. BOMBER SQUADRONS

Complete Czech units—pilots, air crew, ground staff—operated with the Royal Air Force, carrying the war into Germany and serving also in the Middle East. In this photograph the crew of a Wellington watch the 'bomb-train' go by with new missiles for the night's activities.

Photo, Topical Press



Diary of the War

DECEMBER, 1940

December 1, 1940. R.A.F. make day attack on Lorient and night raid on Wilhelmshaven. Submarine "Triad" presumed lost. Southampton heavily raided at night. Bombs also fall on London and Home Counties. Enemy lose eight aircraft, Britain five. Athens reports considerable advance on all fronts.

December 2. Lorient raided. Shipping off Norwegian coast attacked. In Mediterranean R.A.F. bomb Naples and Sicilian aerodromes. Heavy raid reported on Benina aerodrome, and on troops, camps and transport in East Africa. Heavy night raid on Bristol.

December 3. Day attacks on aerodromes in N. France; night raids on Ludwigshaven, Mannheim, Essen and Dunkirk. Night raiders start fires in London. Heavy attack on Midlands, particularly Birmingham. Athens reports capture of fresh heights dominating Argyrokastro and Pogradets.

December 4. Sustained raid on Düsseldorf. R.A.F. also bomb Antwerp, Calais and several aerodromes. Other forces damage Italian destroyer off Santi Quaranta and Royal Arsenal at Turin. Day and night raids on East Anglia, Midlands, London and Home Counties. Italians evacuate Argyrokastro.

December 5. Armed merchant cruiser "Carnarvon Castle" in action with heavily armed German raider in South Atlantic, and slightly damaged. Day attacks on Rotterdam airport, Haamstede aerodrome and Lorient. South Coast town heavily bombed at night. Enemy lose 14 aircraft, Britain two. Greeks occupy Premeti and Libohovo.

December 6. Heavy R.A.F. attacks on aerodromes in France and Low Countries and on ports of Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne. Bristol suffers severe night raid. London, Midlands and Wales also attacked. Greeks occupy Santi Quaranta and enter outskirts of Argyrokastro. Further Greek advance towards Klisura. Marsbal Badoglio resigns: succeeded by Gen. Ugo Cavallero.

December 7. Sustained attack on Düsseldorf area. Other objectives of R.A.F. are Antwerp, Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, Lorient, Brest and several aerodromes. In Mediterranean R.A.F. raid Durazzo, Valona and shipping off Albania. Italians in retreat on all fronts.

December 8. London suffers very heavy night raid, resulting in considerable damage. Three enemy aircraft shot down. Renewed attacks on Düsseldorf. Other forces bomb Lorient, shipping at Bordeaux and Brest, ports of Flushing, Dunkirk and Gravelines. Greeks occupy Argyrokastro and Delvino. Italians continuously retreating towards Chimara.

December 9. British advanced forces in Western Desert make contact with Italians on broad front south of Sidi Barrani and take 1,000 prisoners. R.A.F. bomb Bremen, Lorient and Boulogne. Greeks advance towards Chimara. Gen. Le Q. Martel appointed to newly created Command of Royal Armoured Corps.

December 10. British advance in Western Desert continues. British naval forces harass enemy retreating along coast. R.A.F. attack Channel invasion ports and targets in W. Germany and enemy-occupied territory. Greek offensive continues throughout whole front.

December 11. British forces capture Sidi Barrani and many prisoners. R.A.F. bomb invasion ports, aerodromes and targets in W. Germany. Heavy night attack on Birmingham. Greek advance continues along 80-mile front.

December 12. More than 20,000 prisoners taken in Western Desert. Enemy retreat continues. British naval units bomb Kismayu, It. Somaliland. Sheffield heavily raided at night. London, Liverpool and other areas also attacked. Death of Lord Lothian.

December 13. Submarine "Truant" sinks Italian supply ship off Cape Spartivento. German supply ship reported sunk off Norway by Submarine "Sunfish." Armed merchant cruiser "Forfar" reported sunk. R.A.F. bomb Kiel, Bremen, Bordeaux, and docks and aerodromes in Holland. Italians continue withdrawal from Egypt, closely pursued. Greeks reach coast north of Chimara.

December 14. Italian submarine "Naiade" sunk by British destroyers. British liner "Western Prince" torpedoed in Atlantic. R.A.F. bomb Brest and Lorient. British advance in Western Desert continues. Laval dismissed.

December 15. British troops now in Libya. R.A.F. bomb local aerodromes, particularly Bardia. Other forces bomb Berlin, Frankfort-on-Main, Kiel and Bremen. Long-range bombers made heavy night raid on Naples. Sheffield area heavily attacked at night.

December 16. Submarine "Truant" sinks large tanker off Calabrian coast. R.A.F. attack Mannheim, Bordeaux and other targets. British occupy Sollum and Fort Capuzzo. Night raids on London, Thames estuary town, Liverpool area and Midlands.

December 17. Severe fighting in Bardia sector. Libya. Enemy retreating towards Derna. Heavy raids on Libyan aerodromes. R.A.F. attack Mannheim, and bases on Channel coasts.

December 18. British m.t.b.s on patrol sink armed enemy supply ship off Belgium. Operations continue in Bardia area with naval support. R.A.F. bomb Mannheim and submarine base at Lorient.

December 19. Bardia encircled by British. R.A.F. attack aerodrome at Le Touquet, and targets in Ruhr and Western Germany. Brindisi heavily bombed. Greeks occupy new positions after successful engagements.

December 20. R.A.F. bomb Berlin, Channel invasion ports, docks at Amsterdam, gun positions near Gris Nez and many aerodromes. Widespread night raids over Britain, particularly on Merseyside. Greeks bombarding Tepelini and Klisura. Naval aircraft attack Tripoli.

December 21. Naval aircraft sink two merchant ships in Mediterranean by torpedo. R.A.F. bomb many targets in Ruhr, Rhineland, and Channel areas. Night raiders again attack Liverpool and Merseyside, causing great damage and many casualties. Greeks now beyond Chimara. Big battle in progress in Tepelini-Klisura sector.

December 22. R.A.F. bomb Wilhelmshaven, Brest and Lorient, and many targets in W. Germany, including Mannheim, Ludwigshaven, Cologne, Frankfort-on-Main; Channel ports also attacked. Heavy night raids on Merseyside and Manchester.

December 23. Athens announces fall of Chimara. Battle continuing near Klisura. R.A.F. attack Boulogne, Dunkirk, Ostend, and industrial targets in Rhineland. Widespread night raids over Britain. Three raiders shot down.

December 24. Greeks continue successful advance. R.A.F. attack Valona. Situation quiet around Bardia.

December 25. British convoy in North Atlantic attacked by enemy warship. One ship slightly damaged and H.M.S. "Berwick" also sustains small damage while pursuing raider. Greeks launch attack north of Pogradets.

December 26. Growing revolt reported in Southern Abyssinia. R.A.F. bomb aerodromes in Brittany and aerodrome at Bordeaux. H.M. destroyer "Acheron" reported sunk. Italian retreat continues beyond Chimara.

December 27. Pacific isle of Nauru (British) heavily shelled by enemy raider disguised as Japanese. Severe damage done. R.A.F. raid enemy ports from Norway to Normandy. Base at Lorient suffers four-hour night onslaught.

December 28. R.A.F. bomb oil targets at Rotterdam and Antwerp and raid Lorient. German invasion ports plastered. Daylight raid on Southampton, and destructive night one on town in S.W.

December 29. Waves of night raiders over London, showering incendiaries over City and outskirts. Immense destruction of buildings, including Guildhall, nine City churches, Trinity House, etc. R.A.F. twice raid Naples. Other forces attack aerodromes and Channel invasion ports, and targets in Frankfort area. British artillery active in Bardia district.

December 30. British still shelling Bardia. R.A.F. bomb Libyan landing-grounds, and Taranto, Naples, and Palermo harbour. Athens announces successful local operations.

December 31. British warship reported to have sunk four Italian supply ships in Adriatic. R.A.F. carry out daylight raids on Cologne, oil supplies at Rotterdam and docks at Ymuiden. Siege of Bardia continues. British patrols now more than 70 miles inside Libya. Greeks occupy more fortified positions north of Chimara. Valona bombed by R.A.F. for twenty-third time.

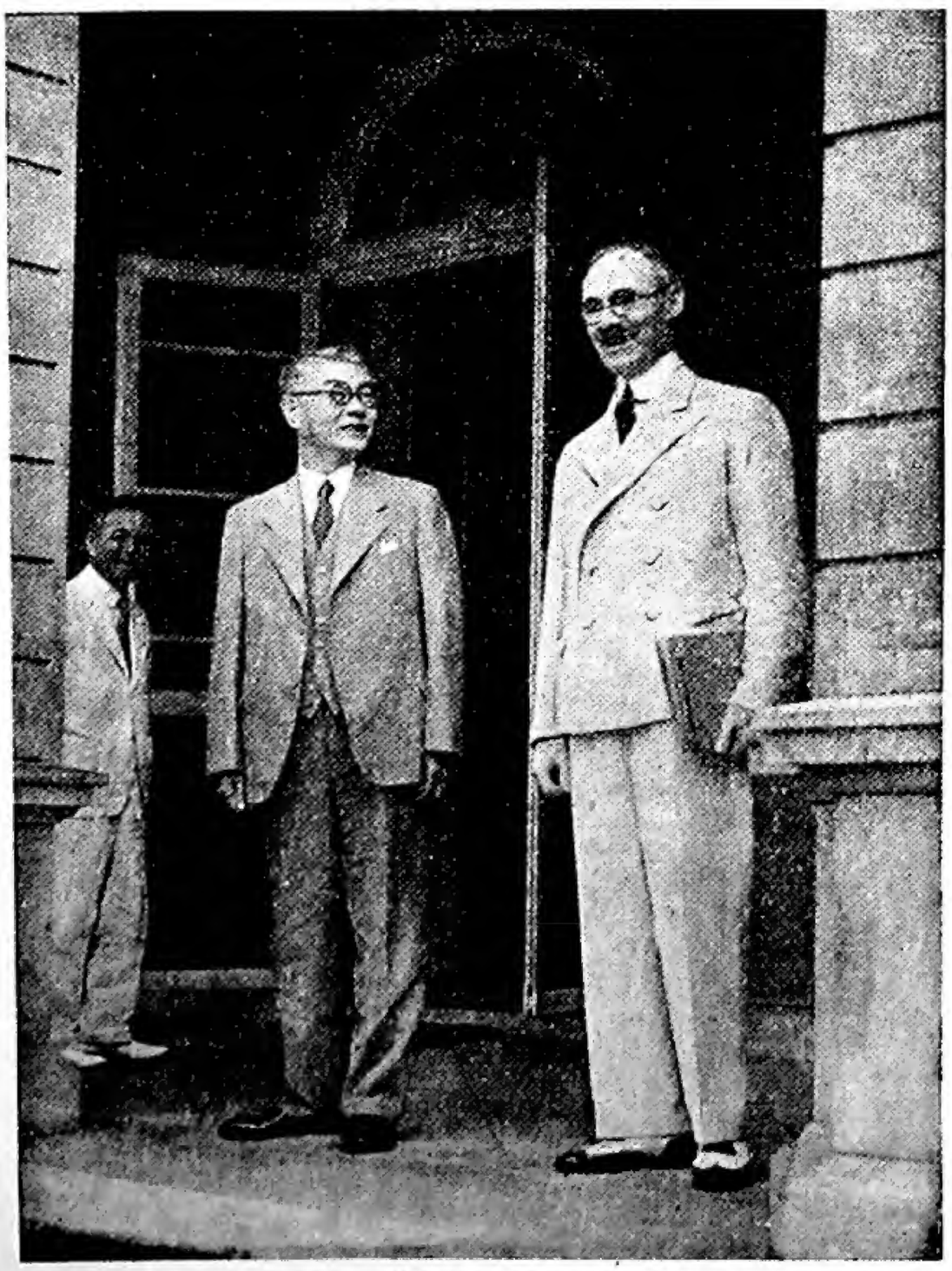
Chapter 140

JAPAN AND THE FAR EAST: TREND OF POLICY DURING 1940

Japan's Reaction to the Russo-German Pact—Affair of the 'Asama Maru'—Prince Konoye Takes the Helm: Turning Japan into a Fascist State—Britain Closes the Burma Road for Three Months—Japan Demands Bases in Indo-China—Agreement with Vichy Government—'New Order' for Eastern Asia, on the Nazi Model

SITUATED at the far side of the globe from war-torn Europe, Japan did not escape the backwash of the colossal struggle. Though not a belligerent, she was closely concerned as a signatory of the Anti-Comintern Pact, that agreement which was concluded between Germany and Japan in 1936 and joined by Italy a year later. Now Germany (and, in due course, Italy too) was at war with Britain, one of the great powers of the Pacific, that ocean in which Japan, because of her geographical position, has a peculiar interest. The situation was rendered more difficult by the open favour displayed by the United States towards the British Commonwealth. Another confusing factor was the working alliance concluded between Germany and Russia in the early days of the war; Japan's policy for years had been markedly anti-Communist, and there was no nation more surprised than the Japanese at Hitler's Machiavellian stroke, which brought Soviet Russia into the same camp as Germany, Japan's ally.

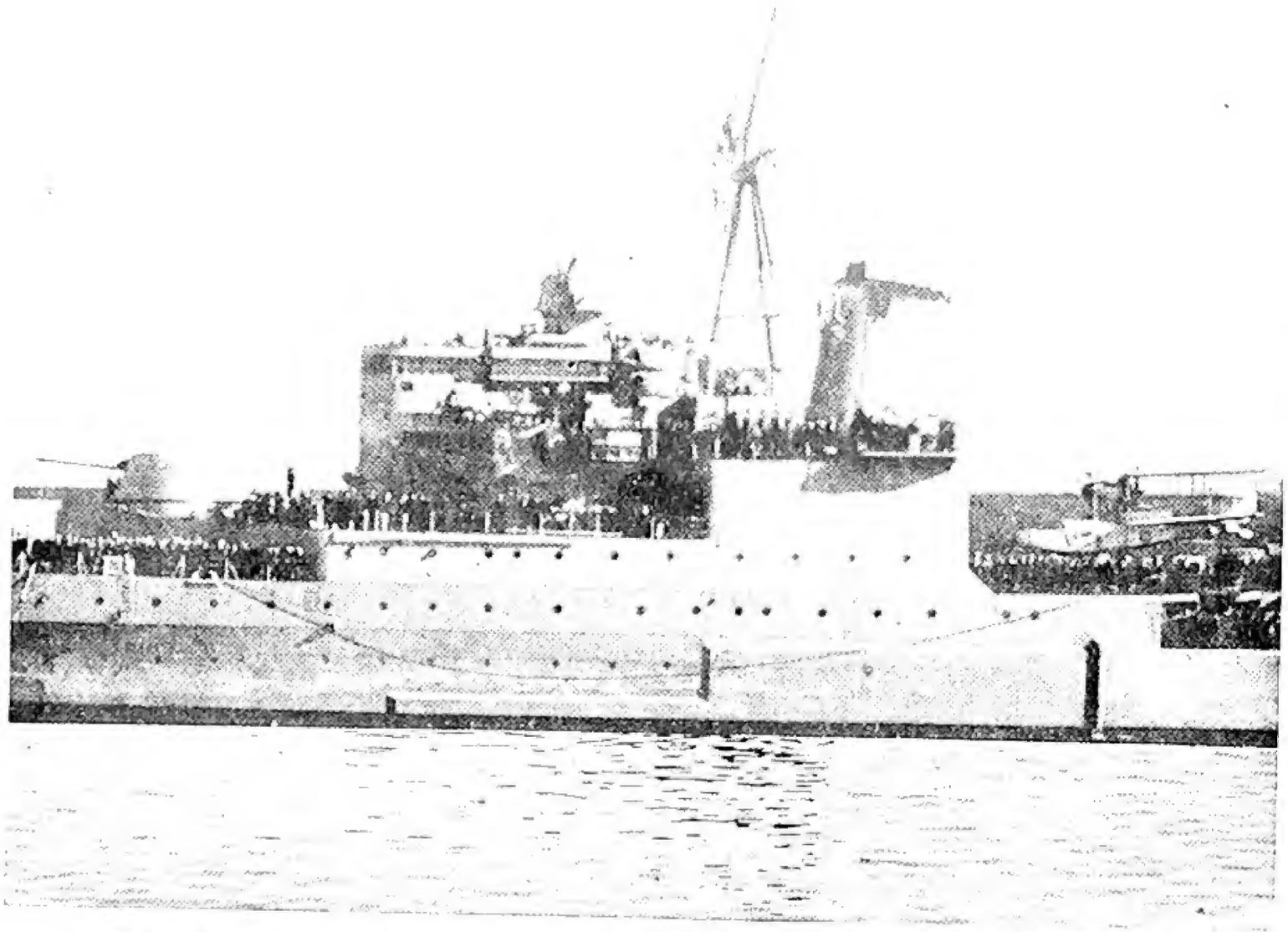
One of the first results of the Russo-German pact was a Cabinet crisis in Japan. In August, 1939, General Abe supplanted Baron Hiranuma, but his Ministry was short-lived, since in January, 1940, the military chiefs, who are the real wielders of political power in modern Japan, made it clear to him that he no longer possessed their confidence. He resigned, and in his stead reigned Admiral Yonai, a former minister of the Navy. In the new Cabinet the portfolio of Foreign Affairs was entrusted to Mr. Hachiro Arita, a professional diplomat, who was well informed on the subject of China at least—and China, since the "incident" which began in July, 1937, showed no signs of drawing to a close, was still perhaps the most important subject in the whole field of foreign affairs. As spokesman of the new Cabinet, Mr. Arita declared that they had two principal aims: the satisfactory disposal of the China Incident, and an improvement in Japan's relations with Britain, the U.S.A., and the U.S.S.R. At the same time he emphasized that no change was intended "in the friendly relations between Germany, Italy and Japan, since their Tripartite Anti-Comintern Pact still exists."



WHEN BRITAIN CLOSED THE BURMA ROAD
In the summer of 1940, when the European situation was grave, Britain acceded to a Japanese demand that supplies to China via the Burma Road should be stopped. Here Mr. Hachiro Arita (Japanese Foreign Minister) and the British Ambassador, Sir Robert Craigie, are seen after a conference at Tokyo in July.
Photo, Planet News

So far as the second aim was concerned the signs were unpropitious, since not only was there a breakdown in the negotiations with Russia over the frontier between Outer Mongolia and Manchukuo, but there was a lively dispute with Britain. On January 21 the Japanese liner "Asama Maru" was stopped by a British warship some 45 miles from the Japanese coast, and 21 Germans of military age, who were on the way from San Francisco to Germany, were taken off. Forthwith the Japanese Foreign Office presented a Note to the British Embassy in Tokyo, stating that the Japanese Government regarded the action as a serious and unfriendly act, and demanding a full explanation. The British Ambassador, Sir Robert Craigie, in his reply made it clear that the British warship was acting in strict accordance with international law; he cited precedents drawn from both the last war and the present conflict, and pointed out that, while there were 51 Germans on board the "Asama Maru," only 21 men who were returning to the Reich to enter the German Navy, and particularly the submarine service, had been removed. Great indignation was vented in the Japanese press, and on February 1 Mr. Arita made a formal demand for the return of the 21 detained Germans. Eventually a compromise was arrived at. Sir Robert Craigie, on behalf of the British Government, stated that investigation had disclosed that nine of the detainees were relatively unsuitable for military service, and that, therefore, while reserving all their legal rights, His Majesty's Government were prepared to release them. The nine Germans were handed over to the Japanese authorities in Yokohama on February 29, and so the affair was closed.

Another strain on Anglo-Japanese relations was imposed by the dispute



THE AFFAIR OF THE 'ASAMA MARU'

On January 21, 1940, a cruiser of the Southampton class stopped the Japanese liner 'Asama Maru' some 45 miles off the coast of Japan and removed 21 German nationals. Top, the British cruiser; below, left, a Naval rating escorting one of the Germans to the gangway; right, some of the prisoners in the cruiser's boat.

Photos, Planet News; Wide World





over the British Concession at Tientsin, the Chinese treaty port, but after long negotiations an agreement was reached in June, and the Japanese blockade of the Concession was lifted. A third was the arrest in July of a number of British subjects in Tokyo on charges of "espionage and conspiracy." These charges were firmly repudiated, but the men were not released until the British Government had ordered the arrest of a number of Japanese by way of retaliation.

Japan's attitude towards the U.S.A. and the other Pacific Powers hinged upon her conception of her mission as the standard-bearer of culture in the Far East. Mr. Arita proved second to none in his exposition of this imperialistic gospel. On April 15, a few weeks before the Nazi invasion of Holland, he expressed his Government's deep concern over the possibility of the extension of the war to the Dutch East Indies. On May 11, the day following Hitler's attack on the Low Countries, Mr. Arita reiterated that Japan would not tolerate any change in the political status quo of the Netherlands Indies. Sir Robert Craigie hastened to inform Mr. Arita on behalf of the British Government that they shared Japan's concern for the maintenance of the status quo in the East Indies, and also to assure him that Britain had no intention of interfering with it.

A month later Mr. Arita expressed himself on a far wider theme. On June 29 he made a speech, from which

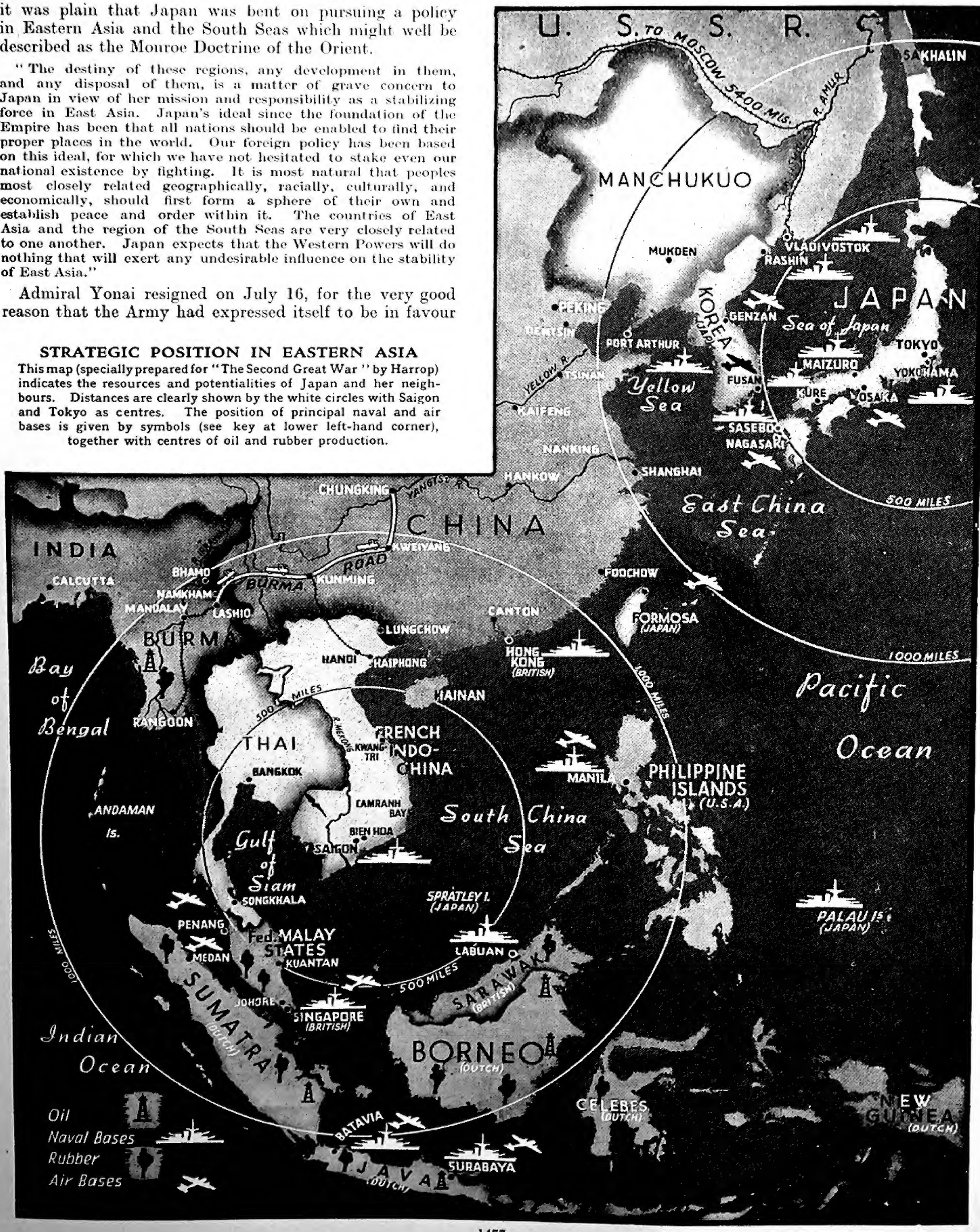
it was plain that Japan was bent on pursuing a policy in Eastern Asia and the South Seas which might well be described as the Monroe Doctrine of the Orient.

"The destiny of these regions, any development in them, and any disposal of them, is a matter of grave concern to Japan in view of her mission and responsibility as a stabilizing force in East Asia. Japan's ideal since the foundation of the Empire has been that all nations should be enabled to find their proper places in the world. Our foreign policy has been based on this ideal, for which we have not hesitated to stake even our national existence by fighting. It is most natural that peoples most closely related geographically, racially, culturally, and economically, should first form a sphere of their own and establish peace and order within it. The countries of East Asia and the region of the South Seas are very closely related to one another. Japan expects that the Western Powers will do nothing that will exert any undesirable influence on the stability of East Asia."

Admiral Yonai resigned on July 16, for the very good reason that the Army had expressed itself to be in favour

STRATEGIC POSITION IN EASTERN ASIA

This map (specially prepared for "The Second Great War" by Harrop) indicates the resources and potentialities of Japan and her neighbours. Distances are clearly shown by the white circles with Saigon and Tokyo as centres. The position of principal naval and air bases is given by symbols (see key at lower left-hand corner), together with centres of oil and rubber production.





JAPAN'S FASCIST PREMIER

Prince Fumimaro Konoye, who formed his Cabinet on July 21, 1940, had pronounced Totalitarian views. He set to work at once to do away with the party system of government and to turn Japan into a Fascist state.

Photo, Wide World

of a new regime. He was succeeded by Prince Konoye, a former premier, a patrician, and Japan's foremost totalitarian politician. Prince Konoye appointed Mr. Yosuke Matsuoka as his Foreign Minister, while he busied himself with plans for the complete abolition of the party system and the conversion of Japan into a Fascist state. He particularly attacked as among the evils of party politics the prevalence of Liberalism, Democracy, and Socialism, which, he declared, were not agreeable to the national ideas of Japan.

He included as the first plank in his platform "the firm establishment of world peace in accordance with the lofty spirit of *Hakkoichiu* (eight corners of the world under one roof), in which the nation was founded, and, as a first step, the construction of a new order in East Asia, having for its foundation the solidarity of Japan, Manchukuo, and China." (Unfortunately for the success of this policy, China continued obdurate in her resistance to the missionaries of the Japanese new order; a few days before Prince Konoye issued his statement the Sino-Japanese war had entered its fourth year.) In a supplement to his chief's pronouncement, Mr. Matsuoka declared in a statement to the press that the mission of Japan was to proclaim and demonstrate *Kodo* (the Imperial Way) throughout the world. Viewed from the standpoint of international relations, this amounted to enabling all nations and races to find each its proper place. "We should be resolved to surmount all obstacles which lie in our path and, in concert with those friendly powers ready to cooperate with us, strive for the fulfilment of the Heaven-ordained mission of our country." At least it was plain that Japan had a very exalted conception of her place in the sun.

Matsuoka on 'World Peace'

During those months when Britain was slowly recovering from the results of the collapse of France Japan's star was in the ascendant over the Pacific. In June the Japanese demanded that the French authorities in Indo-China should refuse to allow the passage of arms to Chiang Kai-shek's army: a demand in which the French at once acquiesced. Then the Japanese Government made a similar demand to Britain in respect of the routes into China through Burma and Hongkong. A note to this effect was handed to Sir Robert Craigie in Tokyo on June 24, and following consultations with London and the Dominions the Ambassador saw Mr. Arita on July 8. The result was not altogether satisfactory from the Japanese point of view, and further discussions took place in the following week. Then on July 17 it was announced that agreement had been reached between the two Governments, and the next day Mr. Churchill reviewed its terms in the House of Commons. "On June 24," he said, "the Japanese Government requested H.M. Government to take measures to stop the transit to China via Burma of war material and certain other goods. A similar request was made in respect of Hongkong. The continuance of the transit of these materials was represented as having a serious effect on Anglo-Japanese relations. An agreement has now been reached with the Japanese Government as follows:

HONGKONG: The export of arms and ammunition from Hongkong has been prohibited since January, 1939, and none of the war materials to which the Japanese Government attach importance are in fact being exported.

BURMA: The Government of Burma have agreed to suspend for a period of three months the transit to China of arms and ammunition as well as the following articles: petrol, lorries, and railway material.

The categories of goods prohibited in Burma will be prohibited in Hongkong.

In considering the requests made by the Japanese Government and in reaching the agreement to which I have referred, H.M. Government were, however, also bound to have regard to the present world situation, nor could they ignore the dominant fact that we are ourselves engaged in a life-and-death struggle.

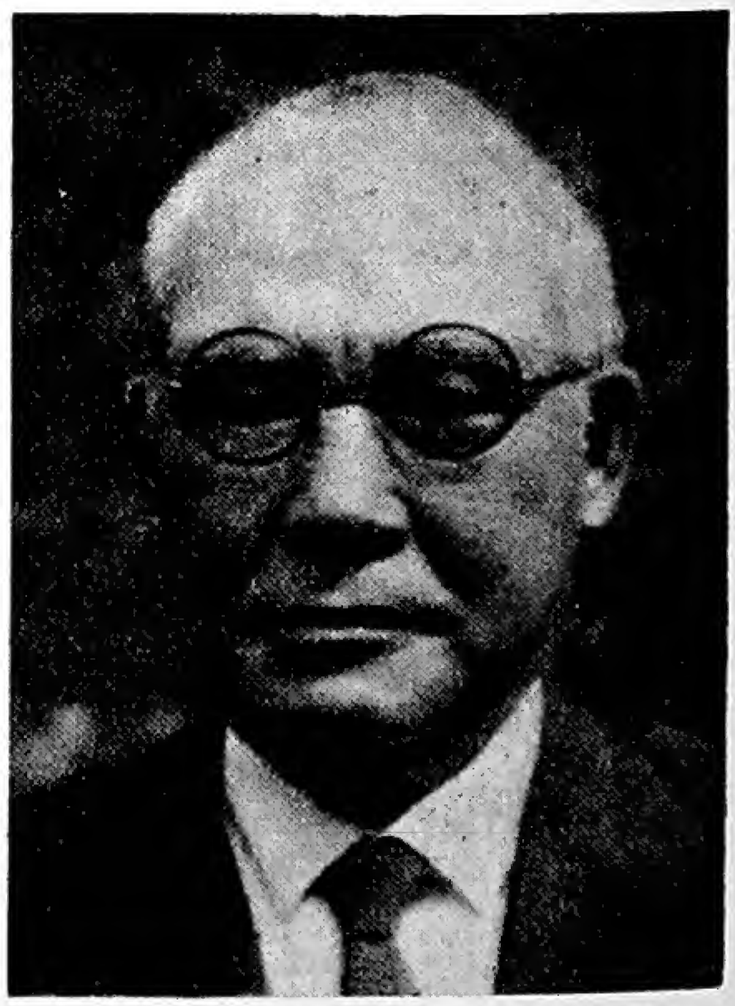
The general policy of this country towards the Far Eastern troubles has been repeatedly defined. We have persistently asserted our desire to see assured to China a free and independent future, and we have as frequently expressed our desire to improve our relations with Japan.

To achieve these objectives two things were essential—time and a relief of tension. On the one hand, it was clear that the tension was rapidly growing owing to the Japanese complaints about the passage of war material by the Burma route. On the other, to agree to the permanent closure of the route would be to default from our obligations as a neutral friendly Power to China. What we have therefore made is a temporary arrangement in the hope that the time so gained may lead to a solution just and equitable to both parties to the dispute, and freely accepted by them both.

We wish for no quarrel with any nation of the Far East. We desire to see China's status and integrity preserved; and, as was indicated in our Note of January 14, 1939, we are ready to negotiate with the Chinese Government, after the conclusion of peace, the abolition of extra-territorial rights, the rendition of concessions, and the revision of treaties on the basis of reciprocity and equality.

We wish to see Japan attain that state of prosperity which will ensure to her population the welfare and economic security which every Japanese naturally desires. Towards the attainment of the aims of both these countries we are prepared to offer our collaboration and our contribution. But it must be clear that, if they are to be attained, it must be by a process of peace and conciliation and not by war or threat of war."

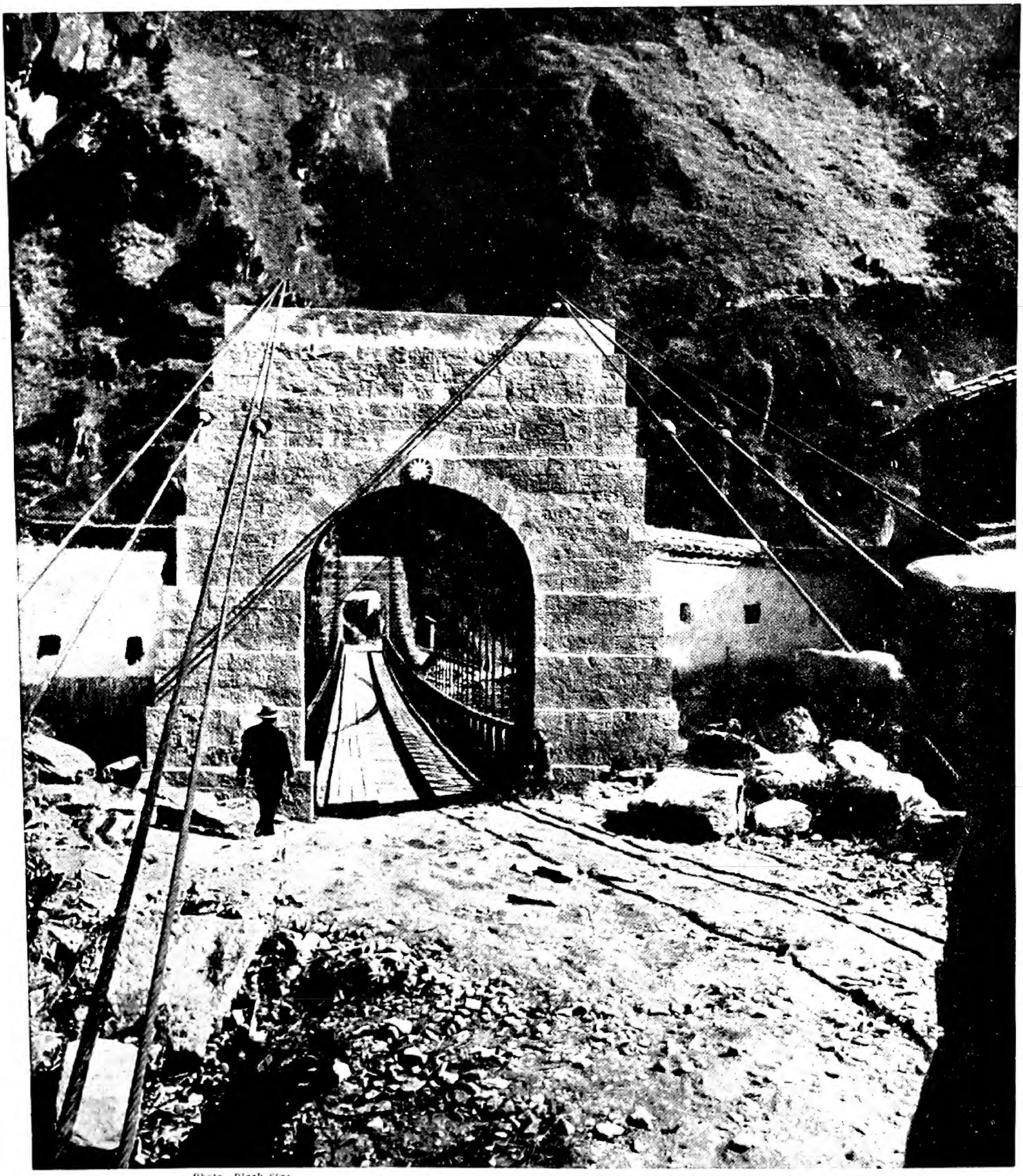
The news of the closing of the Burma Road was received with intense regret in Chungking. "If, by closing the Burma Road," said Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, "Britain hopes to shorten the war in the Far East, I am sure



AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S.A.

Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura, former Foreign Minister, was appointed Ambassador to the United States in November, 1940. In a highly rhetorical speech on December 19 he called on his compatriots to 'guard the peace of the Pacific.'

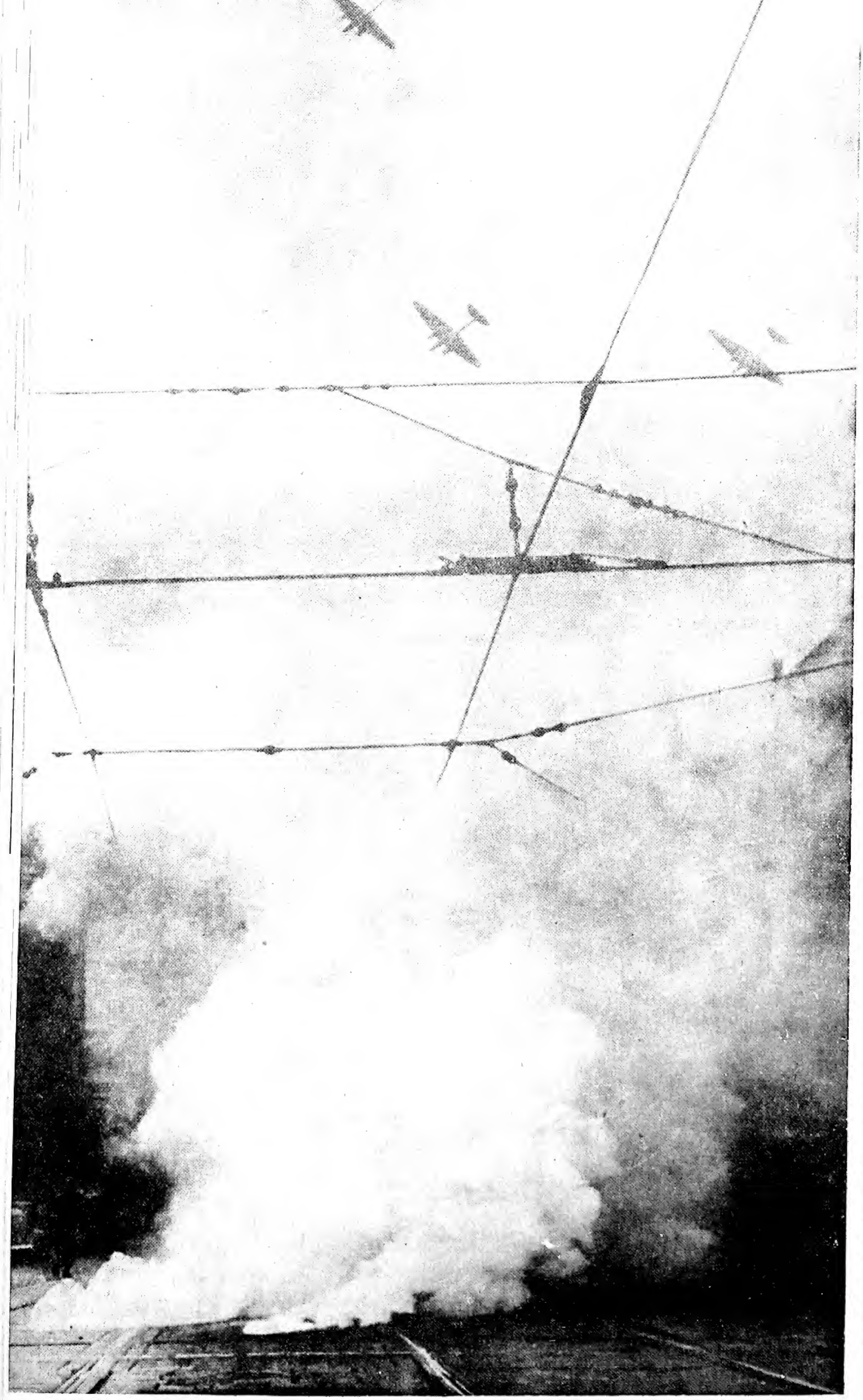
Photo, Wide World



Photo, Black Star

ON THE BURMA ROAD—ONE OF CHINA'S LIFE-LINES

Constructed in just over a year and opened in December, 1938, the Road runs for 726 miles from Lashio in N.E. Burma to Kunming, capital of the Chinese province of Yunnan. Above is the suspension bridge over the Mekong river. There are 289 bridges in all, and 1,959 culverts. By agreement with the Japanese Government, and as a measure of appeasement, Britain, in July, 1940, closed the road to war supplies for the Chinese, a ban which lasted three months. (See map in page 1477.)



JAPAN FEARED AERIAL WARFARE

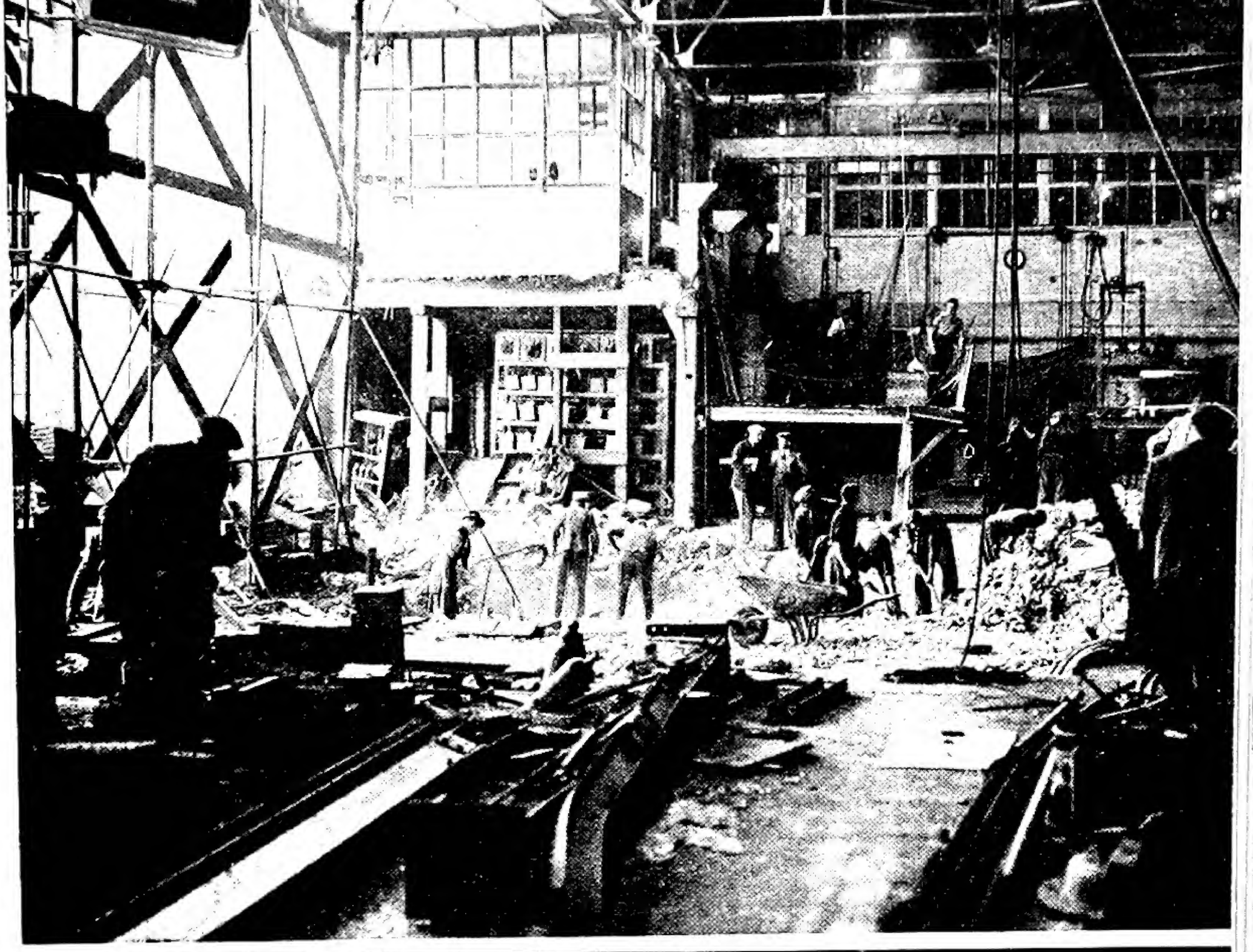
Since most of her city buildings were of flimsy construction and composed largely of timber, Japan stood to suffer very severely from aerial bombing. Alarmed by the trend of policy in 1940 in the U.S.A., where Mr. Roosevelt's re-election was an ominous portent for would-be aggressors, the Japanese Government speeded up A.R.P. measures. Here, in Tokyo, is the scene when a mock raid was staged and the civil defence services carried out a large scale test.

Photo, Keystone

BOMBING DID NOT STOP PRODUCTION

Though this large foundry (right) was eight times bombed during three weeks in the autumn of 1940, it made very little difference to the output of munitions of war. Smelters are seen carrying on while workmen near by fill up a bomb crater. Lower photograph, taken in a north-eastern factory where nearly two thousand men were being trained to become machine operators and fitters, shows a workshop 'lecturette' on how to cut a keyway in a shaft.

Photos, Topical Press; Keystone







EPISODE IN THE RETREAT TO THE VISTULA

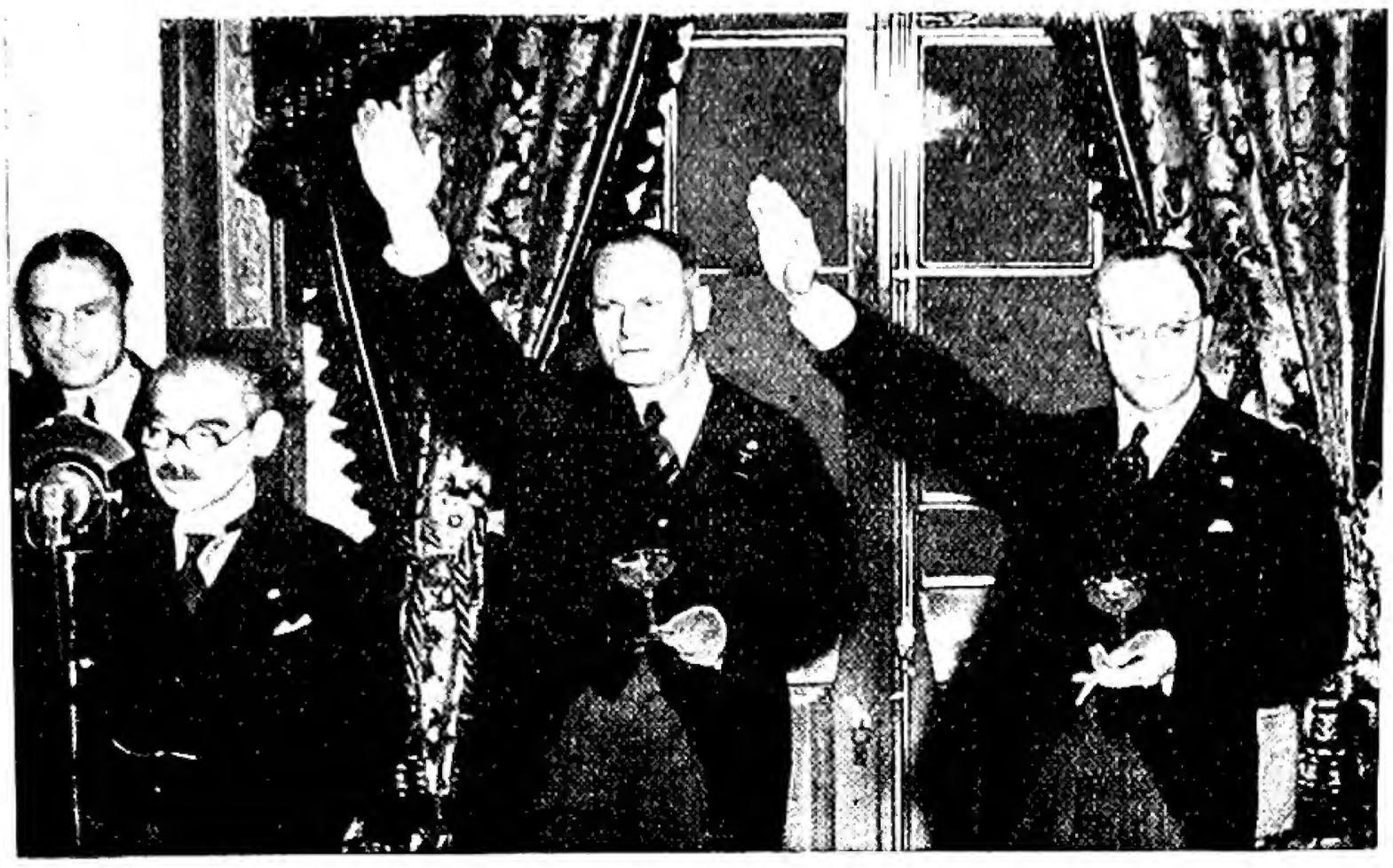
On the evening of September 3 the Polish Army was ordered to withdraw behind the Vistula, and the formations which could execute this move retreated to the river line, destroying bridges wherever possible. Here is the wrecked bridge at Tczew (Dirschau) on the Lower Vistula.

Photo, Keystone

on the contrary, that she will lengthen the duration and widen the scope of hostilities. So long as China has not attained the object for which she has been fighting, namely, the preservation of her sovereignty and her territorial and administrative integrity, she will not lay down her arms." The Chinese Foreign Office denounced the closure as "unfriendly and unlawful," and the step was also received with disfavour by Mr. Cordell Hull, the United States Secretary of State.

It may be doubted, however, whether the closure had any serious effect on Chiang Kai-shek's position, since the rainy season in that corner of the globe begins at the end of June, and the amount of goods transported from then until September would in any case have fallen below the average. And September had hardly run its course when the Road was reopened. "Three months ago," said Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons on October 9, "we were asked by the Japanese Government to close the Burma Road to certain supplies which might reach the Republic of China in its valiant struggle. We acceded to this demand because we wished to give an opportunity to Japan and China to reach what is called in diplomatic language 'a just and equitable settlement' of their long and deadly quarrel. Unhappily this 'just and equitable settlement' has not been reached. On the contrary, the protracted struggle by Japan to subjugate the Chinese race is still proceeding with all its attendant miseries. We much regret the opportunity has been lost, but in the circumstances H.M. Government propose to allow the agreement about closing the Burma Road to run its course to October 17, but we do not see our way to renew it after that." Immediately following the raising of the ban fleets of motor lorries and hundreds of pack animals left Lashio in Burma for China; and, in spite of heavy bombing attacks by Japanese planes, this vital link was restored.

Burma Road Ban



CELEBRATING THE TRIPARTITE PACT IN TOKYO

On September 27, 1940, Germany, Italy and Japan concluded a military, economic and political pact. Here is the scene in the Japanese Foreign Office at Tokyo after that event. Matsuoka, Japan's Foreign Minister, is at the radio microphone; the others are, left to right, Mario Indelli, Italian Ambassador; Maj.-Gen. Ott, German Ambassador; and Stahmer, Ribbentrop's envoy.

Photo, Fox



JAPANESE STAFF OFFICERS AT THE MAGINOT LINE

In the summer of 1940 a party of Japanese officers was conducted over the battlegrounds of France. With Nazi officials, some are here inspecting one of the battered blockhouses in the Maginot defences. A week or two later, on September 27, the signing of the Three-Power Pact between Germany, Italy and Japan took place in Berlin. Though its immediate significance was obscure, it obviously foreboded a menace to British interests in the Far East.

Photo, Planet News

The route through Indo-China remained closed, however, the French authorities in the colony not only accepting the Japanese demand, but agreeing to admit Japanese inspectors to see that the ban was carried into effect. This was but the first of many aggressive acts directed by Japan against this outpost of the now collapsing French imperial power. On August 5 it was reported from Vichy that Japan had demanded the right to establish naval, military and air bases in French Indo-China, as well as facilities for the transport of troops via the Kunming-Hanoi railway. The demand was backed by the arrival of Japanese warships at Haiphong in the Gulf of Tongking, while numbers of Japanese troops were transferred from Central China to the Indo-Chinese frontier. These moves were at once met by the concentration of large forces of Chinese Nationalist troops in Yunnan, in readiness to meet any threat which might develop through Indo-China. The French authorities not proving sufficiently amenable, particularly over the subject of permitting Japanese troops to pass through

Demands on Indo-China



CHINA'S GENERALISSIMO AND HIS DEVASTATED CAPITAL

Chungking, where the Chinese seat of government was transferred in 1937 from Nanking, was frequently bombed by the Japanese : the top photograph was taken in September, 1940, during a raid. Below, General Chiang Kai-shek, who led the long struggle against the Japanese invaders, is seen with Mme Chiang Kai-shek at a performance given by girls of a summer camp near Chungking.

Photos, Black Star ; Associated Press



Tongking to the Chinese frontier, the Japanese confronted the French authorities with a 72-hour ultimatum on September 19. This was accepted on September 22, and an agreement signed in Hanoi was reported to have given the Japanese all they asked : the main points, so far as they were published, were (1) Japan was permitted to establish three air bases in Tongking, and to station 6,000 troops for their supervision ; (2) she was granted the right of passage for Japanese troops ; and (3) to station a certain number of troops at Haiphong. Notwithstanding this, there were some clashes between French and Japanese troops on September 23. Vichy announced that Japan had given an assurance that she would respect the rights and interests of France in the Far East and in particular the territorial integrity of Indo-China, but if these assurances carried any weight in Vichy, they did so nowhere else. The news of the agreement aroused particular concern in Washington.

But Japan in 1940 was indifferent to the displeasure of Washington and London. The future, she was convinced, lay with the Axis Powers, and this conviction found expression in the formal linking of Japan with Germany and Italy in the Tripartite Pact signed in Berlin on Sept. 27 (for terms, *see* page 1291). Any material advantage derived from the Pact accrued to Germany and Italy; Japan got nothing more than recognition by the Axis Powers of her "leadership in the establishment of a new order in Eastern Asia." When the U.S.A. showed signs of refusing to recognize this leadership, Prince Konoye, the Japanese Premier, displayed a truculent mood. "If the U.S.A. deliberately refuses to understand the intentions of the Tripartite Pact," he declared on October 4, "and challenges the Three Powers, we are ready to accept a fight to a finish." A few days later a spokesman of the Japanese Foreign Office expressed himself very pessimistically concerning the possibility of a basic readjustment of Japanese relations with the U.S.A. On the same day Mr. Matsuoka was careful to make plain that Japan had no intention of participating in the European war, although he was most anxious that third powers should cease their "interference" in China.

Japan Signs Axis Pact

Then in Tokyo on December 19, at a meeting in honour of Admiral Nomura,



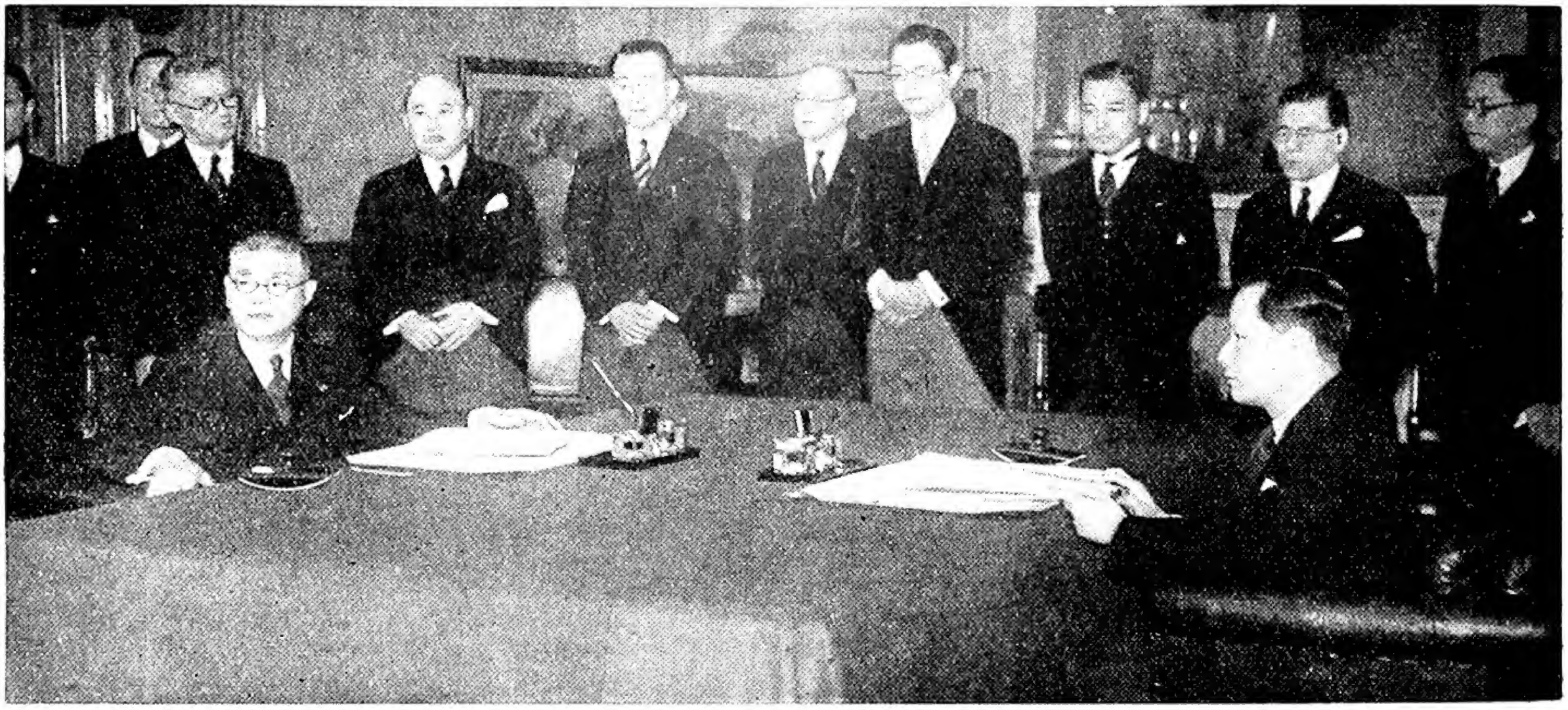




SCENES ALONG THE ROAD THAT IS CHINA'S LIFELINE

The Burma Road connects Chungking, China's wartime capital, with the railhead at Lashio in Burmese territory. Its course is shown on the map in page 1477. Here are scenes en route. Top, left, the town of Shakwan; centre, left, labourers repairing the highway after one of the many Japanese bombing attacks; top, right, lorries laden with war supplies traverse a mountain section of the road; below, right, a lorry convoy speeds through a valley. Another photograph of the road is printed in page 1479.

Photos, Black Star; Wide World; "March of Time"



JAPAN REACHES OUT TO THE MALAY PENINSULA

On June 12, 1940, Japan and Thailand concluded a five-year treaty of amity. Above, Hachiro Arita (Japanese Foreign Minister, left) and the Thai Minister, Thya Sri Sene (right), after signing the pact. Somewhat naively the Japanese caption claims that the pact gave 'unmistakable evidence of Japan's peaceful intentions'; it certainly endowed her with advantages in any future conflict with Britain.

Photo, Wide World



JAPANESE TANKS PATROL FRENCH CONCESSION AT SHANGHAI

By agreement with the French military authorities at Shanghai Japan at the end of July, 1940, took over the policing of the French concession: light tanks are here seen entering the Sikawei section of the territory. This act was but one of many by which Japan profited by France's downfall to secure advantages for herself, and two months later she obtained bases in French Indo-China. (See map in page 1477.)

Photo, Keystone

the newly-appointed Japanese Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Matsuoka, in an impassioned outburst, asked his audience of Japanese and Americans to imagine what would happen if the U.S.A. joined in the European war. He gave the answer: "Armageddon and the total destruction of our culture and civilization." He implored the Americans to think twice before they took the fatal leap, but he made it clear that Japan was, and would remain, loyal to her allies. In future Japan's policy would revolve around the Three-Power Pact, and "any illusion on such issues would do no good to anyone." Then the Premier invited his audience to look forward fifty years to "an era of enduring peace and unlimited prosperity in a Greater East Asia, where we have a great mission as a civilizing and stabilizing force. We shut the door nowhere and to no one. Let us keep cool; we have eternity before us. Is it too much for Japan to ask for half a century in which to prove herself?"

Admiral Nomura followed with a speech in which he compared himself to a common sailor, called to the colours in an emergency. "The lights have gone out in Europe," he said. "Let us guard the peace of the Pacific, the only light of hope now left to mankind."

To this display of rhetoric Mr. Grew, American Ambassador, administered a dash of cold realism. "What counts in international relationships today," he said, "is the concrete evidence of facts and actions, regardless of the persuasive garb in which such facts and actions may be dressed. Let us say of nations as of men, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.'"

Chapter 141

THE HOME FRONT: SETTLING DOWN TO TOTAL WAR, DECEMBER 1940

Britain After Four Months of Aerial Terror—Battle of the Atlantic—War Damage Bill and Personal Injuries Scheme—Food Situation—Mr. Churchill's War Review—Christmas, 1940—The King's Message—The Fire Raid on London—Britain's Home Front Undaunted

With the arrival of December, 1940, the people of Britain had settled down to the war at its worst. They had been in the front line for nearly four months, and in spite of heavy casualties, the discomforts of shelter nights, disorganized transport, rationing—all the hardships of total war—the public's spirit had never been higher.

The general feeling was one of patriotic elation rather than depression. Everybody was proud to have endured the baptism of fire which, in former times, was the privilege of only the fighting services. Though enemy raids had, of course, caused some damage of military importance, the brunt of the battle had fallen upon civilians—themselves, their dwellings, shops, schools, churches, hospitals. As a proof that the Nazis had failed to disrupt our war-factories, Mr. Arthur Greenwood (Minister without Portfolio) told the House that since the outbreak of war the output of equipment had more than trebled and that of production had quadrupled. The rapid recuperation of industrial cities like Birmingham and Coventry after heavy raids was very gratifying.

As for the effect of the Nazi piracy against the merchant ships, it was significant that the output of new shipping since the previous May had risen over 50 per cent, but the rate of sinkings gave cause for grave anxiety. The position was similar to that of 1917. Our tonnage at the beginning of December, 1940, was slightly less than that at the outbreak of war, and the Battle of the Atlantic was actually going against us.

The problem of aliens, friendly and unfriendly, had been exercising the attention of Mr. Herbert Morrison (Home Secretary and Minister for Home Security). The release of interned men who, hating Nazi Germany, might be of use to our war effort, was a wise policy; 8,000 well-disposed internees were scheduled to be freed, and, of the remaining 19,500 detained, some 4,000 had been proved definitely to be hostile. The others were having their cases reviewed. On December 4 the Home Secretary revoked the order imposing upon war refugees who entered the country after May 9 restrictions similar to those on enemy aliens; such refugees would henceforth





COUNTRY BUSES TOOK LONDONERS TO WORK

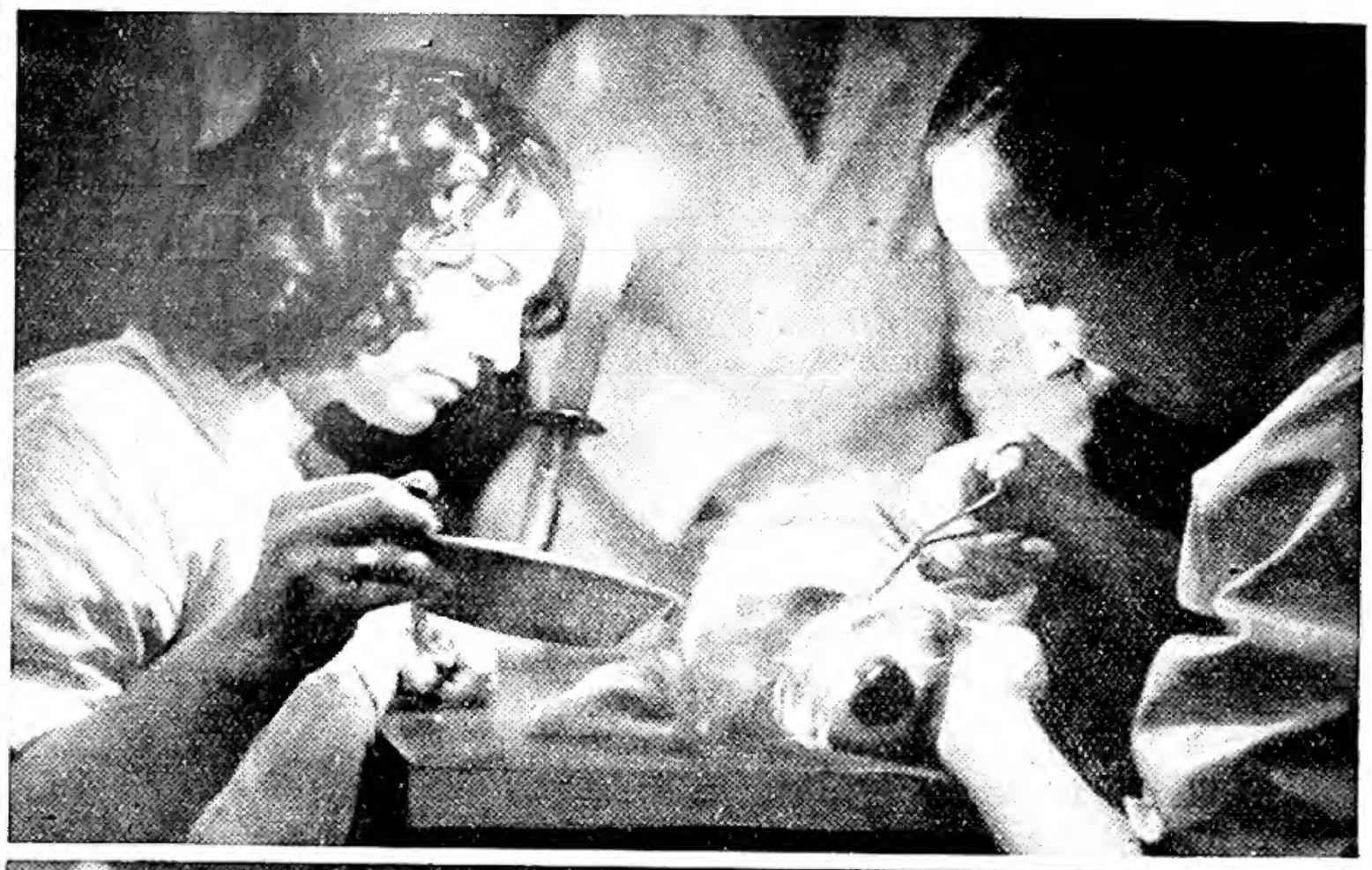
When for a time air raids had disorganized certain suburban rail routes in the autumn of 1940, Scottish and Provincial buses were brought into the Metropolis to aid London Transport. Above, the first in service—a Halifax vehicle; left, a Glasgow Corporation bus passing the Cenotaph in Whitehall.

Photos. "News Chronicle"; "Daily Mail"

be subject only to the general restrictions imposed on all non-enemy aliens.

A matter of universal public concern was given further Parliamentary attention when on December 11 the House







ANIMAL VICTIMS OF THE RAIDS

The People's Dispensary for Sick Animals, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and other humane societies did what was possible for domestic pets injured in air raids. Top, the P.D.S.A. rescue squad with a terrier which had been buried under debris for four days; top, right, an operation by candle-light in an R.S.P.C.A. clinic; lower, right, a patient in an R.S.P.C.A. ambulance.

Photos, Fox; "Daily Mirror"

of Commons introduced the War Damage Bill. It provided compensation for damage caused by enemy action to (1) all buildings and other immovable property; (2) all movable assets of business undertakings; and (3) personal possessions up to a limit of £2,000.

The gist of the Bill was a compulsory contributory scheme of compensation for damage to buildings and other immovable property, at the rate of 2s. in the £ on the net Schedule A value (or net ratable value) each year for five years, and at 6d. in the £ for agricultural properties and land used for open-air recreational purposes. Instalments of the contributions were to be payable on July 1 of the year to which it related, beginning July 1, 1941, and to be collected by the Inland Revenue. The effect of the Bill was retrospective, and these contributions were to be in respect of war damage during the two years from the outbreak of war until August 31, 1941.

Compensation for War Damage

If the total compensation payable should exceed £200,000,000 the Exchequer would meet the excess up to £200,000,000; should it go beyond £400,000,000, one-half of the excess above that figure would be met by the Exchequer and the other half by increased contributions. Compensation for the repair of damaged property urgently needed in the national interest was paid as and when the work was executed. Otherwise it was deferred. Embodied in the Bill was a voluntary scheme for the insurance of all "personal chattels," to cover, among other things, clothing, furniture, motor-cars, etc.

On December 18 Sir Kingsley Wood gave notice of the Extension of Personal Injuries (Civilian) Scheme for civilians killed and injured by war action. It now included the whole adult population. The injury allowance paid to married men (in or out of hospital) was increased to 35s. weekly. Single men, gainfully occupied, received the same benefit if not in hospital, and 24s. 6d. if in hospital. A woman worker (not in hospital) received 28s. Men not gainfully occupied (not in hospital) received 21s., and women in the same category 14s.

Early in the month there were hints that the food situation would not justify any seasonable festivity; and from December 16 the meat ration was reduced from 2s. 2d. to 1s. 10d. weekly, though an increase of tea from two to four ounces and of sugar from eight to 12 ounces was some concession to the Christmas sentiment. The public were warned, however, that after Christmas there would be plainer living. No more bananas, or fresh or canned fruit, except a few oranges, would be imported. Shipping space was wanted for the transport of aeroplanes, tanks and guns.

The "Dig for Victory" campaign had relieved the food shortage to a gratifying extent, and well over half our food was home-grown. The housewife everywhere had become a willing co-operator on the kitchen front, and the war had revolutionized a domestic



KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE HOME FRONT PUBLIC

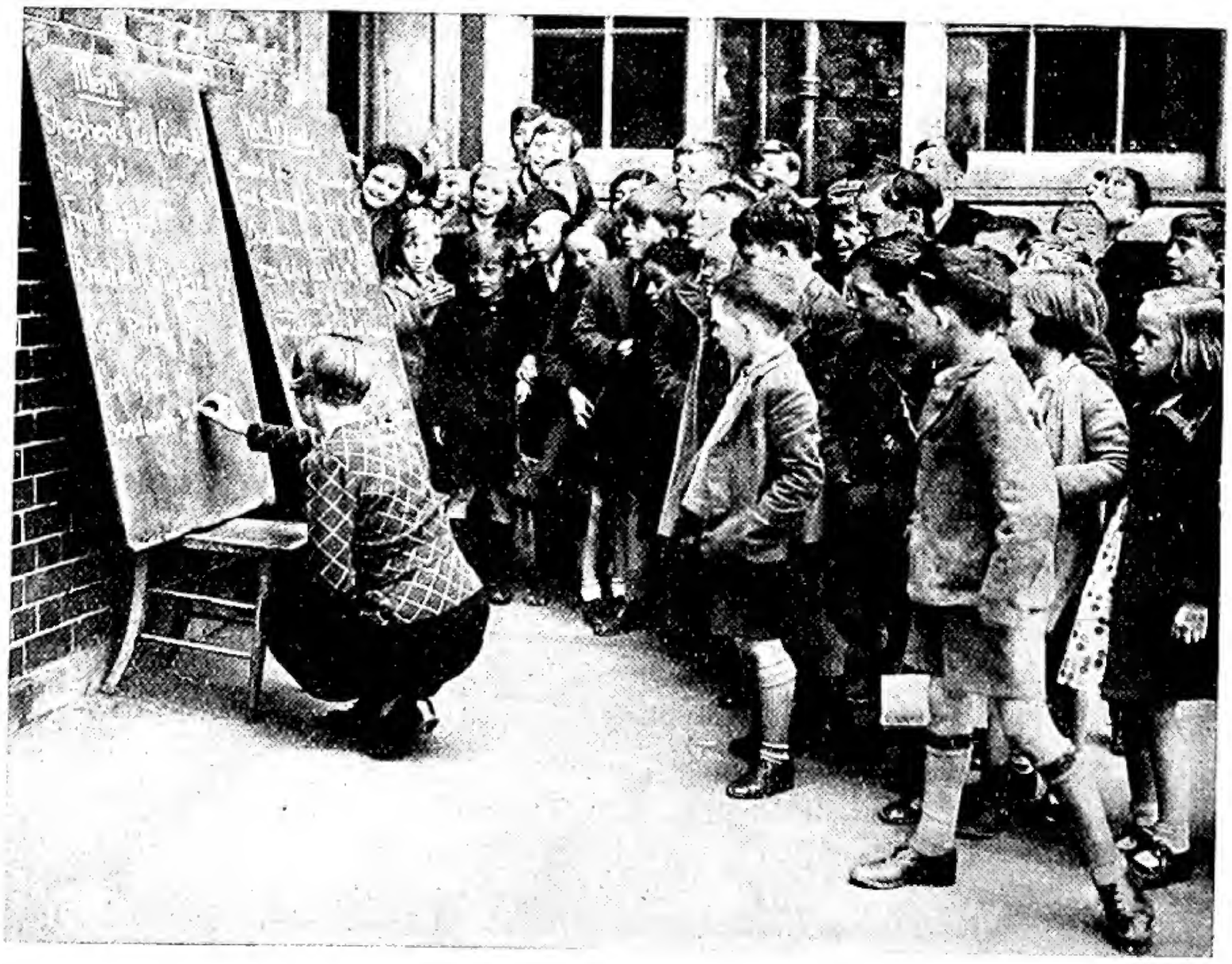
As the war passed into its second year, the Government through its various Ministries made increasing use of the Press as a medium of appeal, advice or exhortation to the people of Britain. The examples here given, which were current during the winter of 1940-1941, include announcements by the Ministries of Information, Food, Transport, Labour and National Service; also by the Mines Department and London Transport. War posters have already been illustrated in 'The Second Great War'—see pp. 538, 551, and 828.



CHILD WELFARE DURING THE RAIDS

While the heavy air raids were at their height in the autumn and winter of 1940, an evening class for young children was held on the platform of the Elephant and Castle Tube station in London. (Note the numbered, 3-tiered bunks which were rapidly standardized in these shelters.) Such enterprise was typical and manifested itself in many ways, another exampie being the establishment of communal feeding centres at schools (below).

Photos, "Daily Mirror"; Fox



economy which had been founded on meat. Circumstances demanded many new ideas in feeding: the value of vegetables and cereals was now universally realized, and tinned foods became a more appreciated item in the larder. Similarly, in the canteens for the workers, care was taken to arrange well-balanced meals under scientific direction. Liberal helpings of potatoes, green vegetables, carrots and wholemeal bread were consumed with relish, and milk as yet was abundant. The rationing system had proved a success.

On December 19 Mr. Churchill devoted part of his War Review to the Home Front. Regarding the Army at home the Prime Minister said:

"We must have a large Army, equipped with the very best weapons, and drilled, trained and practised in all the arts and manoeuvres of war. I am sure that the House will feel that it is a wise and provident provision for 1941, in which no doubt we shall, I trust, find opportunities of using our forces, if not in defence of this island, in other theatres."

Warning us of the omnipresent danger of invasion, Mr. Churchill continued:

"The winter offers some advantages to an invader to counterbalance those which belong to the summer season. It would be a very great lack of prudence, a lack of prudence amounting to a crime, if vigilance were relaxed in our Armies here at home, or if in any way it was assumed that the dangers of invasion had passed."

Periodically there had been rumours that some method had been found of frustrating the night bomber. Much wishful thinking had obviously occurred in this direction. In the course of his speech Mr. Churchill stated that:

"So far we have been no more successful in stopping the German night raider than the Germans have been successful in stopping our aeroplanes that have ranged freely over Germany. We must expect a continuance of these attacks and must bear them. The organization of shelters, the improvement of sanitation, and the endeavour to mitigate the extremely painful conditions under which many people have to get their night's rest—that is the first task of the Government at home."

Conditions were improved in the communal refuges. The supply of bunks in dormitory shelters in the London region alone provided accommodation for 157,200 persons, excluding those in Tube stations used for traffic; 80,000 three-tiered timber bunks, which gave sleeping room for 240,000 people, had been delivered to local authorities in the London region.

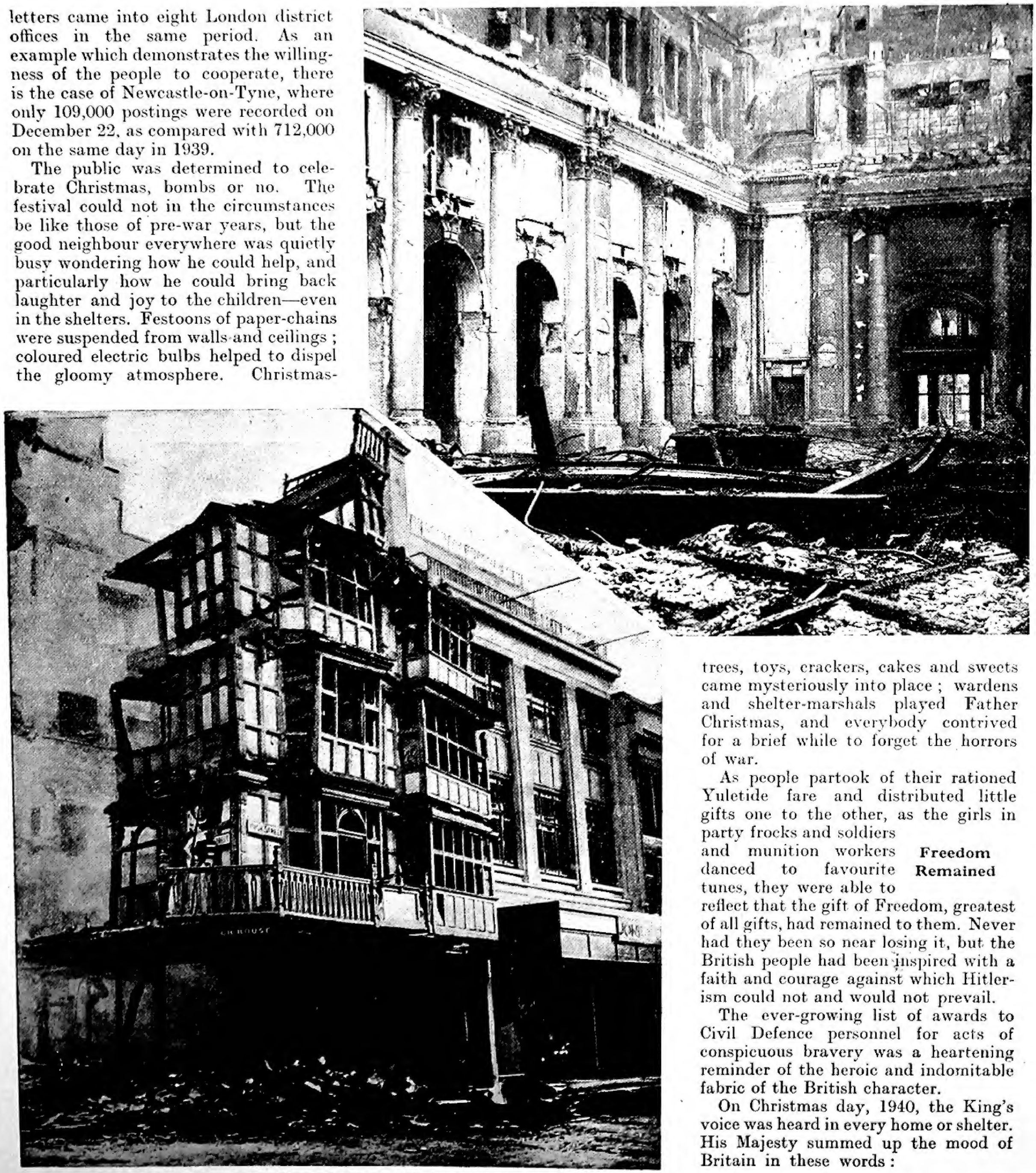
Prudent parents had shown a patriotic example by allowing their children to be removed to safer areas. The number evacuated from the London area and East Ham and West Ham amounted to 624,000, leaving 135,000 remaining; while 4,500 aged and infirm had been evacuated from London shelters. From London hospitals and institutions 4,500 chronic sick had likewise been removed, leaving 3,500 who wished to stay.

Evacuating London Children

As Christmas drew near the traditional goodwill mood was underlined by the perils through which the nation had passed and was passing, but the public tried to reduce the burden on the authorities, so heavy in peacetime at this season. The Post Office, in spite of wartime difficulties, rose to the occasion. People had been asked to complete their postings on December 18, and about 5,000,000 letters were in fact confided to the Royal Mails on that day; 500,000 parcel bags were sent to the London rail depots between December 16 and 23, and more than 25,000,000

letters came into eight London district offices in the same period. As an example which demonstrates the willingness of the people to cooperate, there is the case of Newcastle-on-Tyne, where only 109,000 postings were recorded on December 22, as compared with 712,000 on the same day in 1939.

The public was determined to celebrate Christmas, bombs or no. The festival could not in the circumstances be like those of pre-war years, but the good neighbour everywhere was quietly busy wondering how he could help, and particularly how he could bring back laughter and joy to the children—even in the shelters. Festoons of paper-chains were suspended from walls and ceilings; coloured electric bulbs helped to dispel the gloomy atmosphere. Christmas-



BRISTOL AND MANCHESTER SUFFER HEAVY DAMAGE

Bristol suffered severely from heavy air raids and many landmarks were destroyed, notable among them being this picturesque relic, the Old Dutch House, dating from 1676, which stood at the corner of High Street and Wine Street. Top: the wrecked interior of the Royal Exchange, Manchester, one of the Cotton City's best known buildings, after a concentrated Nazi attack in the winter of 1940. *Photos, "Daily Mirror"; "Daily Mail"*

trees, toys, crackers, cakes and sweets came mysteriously into place; wardens and shelter-marshals played Father Christmas, and everybody contrived for a brief while to forget the horrors of war.

As people partook of their rationed Yuletide fare and distributed little gifts one to the other, as the girls in party frocks and soldiers and munition workers danced to favourite tunes, they were able to reflect that the gift of Freedom, greatest of all gifts, had remained to them. Never had they been so near losing it, but the British people had been inspired with a faith and courage against which Hitlerism could not and would not prevail.

Freedom Remained

The ever-growing list of awards to Civil Defence personnel for acts of conspicuous bravery was a heartening reminder of the heroic and indomitable fabric of the British character.

On Christmas day, 1940, the King's voice was heard in every home or shelter. His Majesty summed up the mood of Britain in these words:

"Remember this. If war brings its separations it brings new unity also, the unity which comes from common perils and common sufferings willingly shared. To be good comrades and good neighbours in trouble is one of the finest opportunities of





G.P.O. CARRIES ON UNDER WAR CONDITIONS

Retrieving letters from the debris of a bombed sorting office. Left : against a damaged shop the 'mobile post office,' in the form of a messenger, waits to accept an urgent telegram. To overcome telephonic and telegraphic chaos the G.P.O. improvised a street telegram service in the ruined London neighbourhoods of Cheapside and Moorgate. Right : an engineer of the London Telephone Service, with the aid of a powerful electric lamp strapped to his forehead, carries out emergency repair work. Beneath : postgirls, employed by the G.P.O. to release men for the forces, learn high-speed sorting to enable them to cope with the Christmas parcel mail.

Photos, Fox ; Topical Press ; Planet News







WELCOME REFRESHMENT FOR BRITAIN'S NIGHT DEFENDERS

During the closing months of 1940 the anti-aircraft defenders of the great cities were in almost continuous nightly action. Here, as elsewhere when danger threatened, women were anxious to share the peril. Above, a mobile canteen worker carries on while the guns of a London A.A. battery roar. (The canteen has been momentarily lit up by a camera man's flash.)

Photo, "The Daily Mirror"

the civilian population, and by facing hardships and discomforts cheerfully and resolutely not only do they do their own duty but they play their part in helping the fighting services to win the war. Time and again during the last few months I have seen for myself the battered towns of England, and I have seen the British people facing their ordeal. I can say to them all that they may be justly proud of their race and nation."

The lull in night bombing to which Mr. Churchill had referred a few days previously came to a sudden and violent end on the night of December 29, when the enemy made a deliberate attempt to destroy the City of London by fire. (*See* Chapter 128 for a fuller account.) Many thousands of fire-bombs were rained upon the area about St. Paul's, Fore Street, Fleet Street, and Southwark. Historic buildings, famous churches and warehouses became a raging inferno. Terrible and devastating, the scene was a marvellous spectacle, with the sky lit for hours by a yellow and crimson glare stabbed at short intervals by the fiercer shafts from exploding bombs. Among the multitude of firemen—regulars supplemented by A.F.S. men from a wide area—who subdued the flames were artists to whom the pictorial possibilities of the Second Fire of London—form, colour and dramatic incident—made an irresistible appeal, and many fine pictures, later exhibited at the Royal Academy, were the result. Some outstanding examples are printed in full colour in pages 1499 to 1502.

Thus 1940 went out in a blaze of Nazi hatred with Britain's Home Front under fire, undaunted by the worst that the enemy had so far done. Morale had never stood higher: there was an unanimous resolve to build up the nation's strength, fortitude and striking power in the New Year, and, if necessary, in succeeding years, until victory had been achieved.



NEW ROOF FOR AN ENGLISHMAN'S HOME

Wherever possible raid-damaged houses were patched up, and local repair organizations worked with commendable efficiency. When dwellings were rendered totally uninhabitable the homeless were first sheltered and fed in rest centres and then alternative accommodation was found.

Photo, Keystone

Chapter 142

THE CAMPAIGN IN POLAND: AN ANALYTICAL SURVEY

Written close on the heels of events, with information necessarily scanty, the story of the Polish campaign presented in Chapters 3, 5, 9, 14 and 16 could not do justice to the heroic resistance of the people of Poland or describe in adequate detail the military operations which led to the swift collapse of their country. Here, in the light of later and fuller reports, the military side of the struggle is surveyed by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

EARLIER Chapters of the "Second Great War" dealt mainly with the political situation and the factors which led up to the onslaught on Poland. As regards military aspects of the Polish campaign little reliable information was at the time available. The strategic plans of the opponents, their tactical methods, the organization and relative strength of their armies were mainly a matter of deduction. Events moved so fast and in such an unanticipated manner that Press reports of operations were bound to be vague and unreliable. Only such outstanding features as the heroic defence of Warsaw and the barbarous and ruthless use of the German air arm left a clear impression on the public mind. Great as was the sympathy for Poland's fate, it is undeniable that disappointment and surprise were felt that her power of resistance was so soon broken.

Subsequent events have revealed the power of the German war machine. We now know how it works and are better able to appreciate how hopelessly Poland was handicapped in her gallant efforts to resist its crushing strength. It will, of course, be long before a complete history of the campaign can be written, but, in justice to Poland, it is proposed in this Chapter to review in broad outline the strategical aspects of the war in the light of our present knowledge, and to attempt to correct some of the false impressions which became current.

When Poland was reconstituted as a sovereign State in 1919 danger threatened her chiefly on her Eastern Front. With Germany disarmed and exposed to preventive action by France, Poland had little to fear from the west. Her defence plans, therefore, corresponded to the situation, and her munition establishments were sited in the west. Even when German rearmament became patent, and France's power of preventive action was diminished by the German reoccupation of the Rhineland and by Belgium's policy of neutrality, Hitler's non-aggression pact allayed such feeling of alarm as Poland might have had.

The Danzig Quarrel

It was not till the bastion of Czechoslovakia disappeared and the Danzig quarrel became acute that Poland awoke to her danger, though she remained confident in the military qualities of her people and underrated the power of the new German war machine. The partial failure of the Germans' mechanized movements during their recent advance into Austria and the obvious difficulty Germany had in finding adequate numbers of well-trained officers and N.C.O.s for her rapidly expanding army tended to produce the impression that the Reich would not dare to resort to force, but was manoeuvring to obtain concessions

POLISH ARMY COMMANDERS

CRACOW ARMY	Gen. Szyling
LODZ ARMY	Gen. Rommel
POZNAN ARMY	Gen. Kutrzeba
POMORZE ARMY	Gen. Bortnowski
MODLIN ARMY	Gen. Przedzymirski
MECHANIZED BRIGADE	Gen. Maczek

See map in page 1495 for army areas

POLISH COMMANDERS IN DEFEAT AND EXILE

The Polish General Kutrzeba arriving to negotiate Warsaw's surrender to the Nazis on September 27, 1939, owing to the plight to which the city had been reduced. Most of the houses and public buildings were in ruins. On the right: Gen. Maczek, Commander of the Polish Mechanized Brigade, with (left) Gen. Sikorski in Scotland after the end of the Polish campaign.

Photos, Associated Press; Polish Ministry of Information









Field-Marshal List, who struck into Southern Poland.

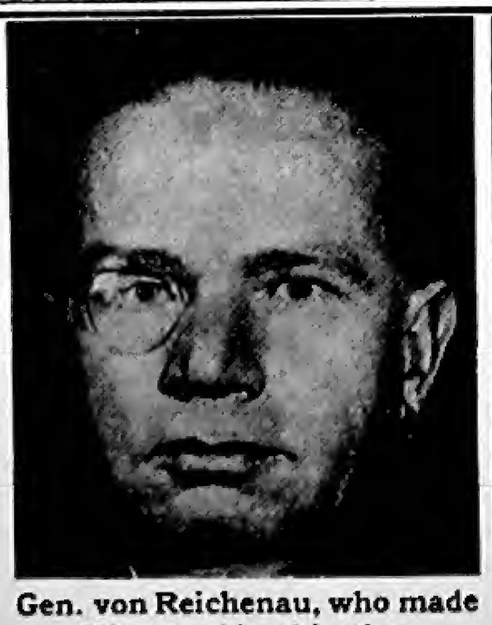


Gen. Blaskowitz, who attacked towards Lodz.

NAZI STRATEGY IN POLAND

The German strategy of envelopment combined with the use of fast armoured divisions was first tried against Poland. In this map are shown the movements of the Nazi Panzer formations and the Polish lines of retreat. The zones of operation of the main German armies are indicated.

Map by Stanford. Portraits, E.N.A.; Sport & General; Planet News



Gen. von Reichenau, who made Warsaw his objective.



Gen. von Kluge, who overran the Corridor.





EARLY HOURS OF THE POLISH CAMPAIGN

After a fierce preliminary bombardment on land and from the air the German armies crossed the Polish border on September 1, 1939. Overborne by superior numbers and the weight of the enemy's armoured forces, the Poles were compelled to withdraw. Top, German soldiers removing a frontier post prior to the general advance; below, anti-tank defences at the Silesian border town of Strzybnica, 19 miles N.W. of Katowice.

Photos, E.N.A.; Associated Press

in the negotiations concerning the future of Danzig and the Polish Corridor.

Poland herself was anxious to avoid all action which might jeopardize a peaceful settlement. Yet it was obvious that her strategic position, if Germany should resort to military measures, was desperately insecure. Western Poland formed a great salient enclosed by German or German-occupied territory. It presented a frontier without natural obstacles to invasion, and much too long to permit of its defence by elaborate fortification.

Poland's Vulnerable Salient

Only at the base of the salient was there a natural defensive position to be found, formed by the rivers Narew, Bug, Vistula, and San; and even that position could be turned from East Prussia in the north and from Slovakia in the south. In any case it was neither politically nor strategically practicable to abandon western Poland without fighting and to stand on the defensive behind the river lines; for western Poland contained nearly half the Polish population and the chief industrial districts of the country. (The reader should refer to the double-page map between pages 16 and 17, and also to that in page 45.)

Defence schemes, so far as they contemplated an attack by Germany, provided for a war of manoeuvre by army groups and counter-offensive action in which mobility would be increased by the high proportion of cavalry maintained. Only if compelled by circumstances would the armies retreat to defensive positions behind the rivers. With her population of thirty-five millions Poland was not deficient in man power, and a high proportion of the men had received sound military training. But financial considerations and her small industrial capacity had prevented the modernization of Polish armaments to anything like the standards Germany had adopted. To meet German tanks Poland relied on anti-tank weapons. Of mechanized formations she had but one brigade of mechanized cavalry with one company of tanks attached, and the rest of her cavalry could not match the power or mobility of a Panzer formation. Her anti-aircraft defences were still on a small scale, and her aircraft of the first line numbered less than 500 of all types.

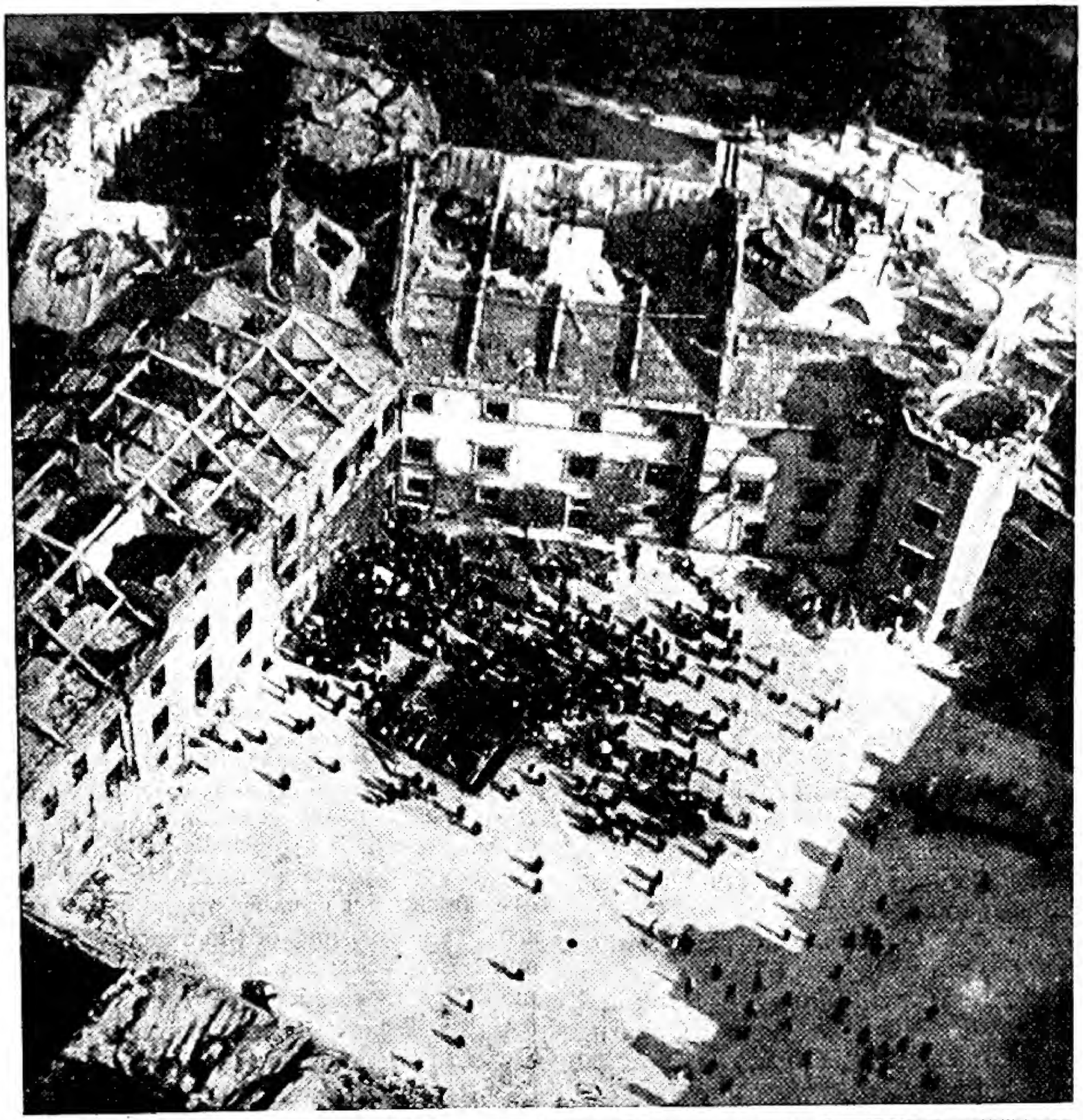
Poland could mobilize 30 active and 10 reserve infantry divisions. There was also a number of infantry battalions which could be mobilized for local defence throughout the country, but their equipment was on a low scale and they were without artillery. Even the regular divisions had fewer guns than corresponding German formations.

If, trusting in the martial qualities of her people and the assistance she hoped to receive from the Allies, Poland was over-confident, it must be remembered that the power of the German war machine had not yet been shown. Experience in Spain had thrown doubts on the effectiveness of tanks in mobile warfare, and the part the air arm might play was not fully recognized. Germany, however, had had better opportunities of gauging the potentialities of these weapons.

As the crisis approached, Germany, under cover of negotiations, secretly completed her mobilization, and by August 23 was ready to strike. Though aware of menacing German concentrations, the Poles, in order to give no pretext for aggression, took a minimum of counter-measures and delayed the order for general mobilization until August 30. Under pressure from the Allies, still hoping for a peaceful solution by negotiation, this measure was taken a day later than was originally intended, and the delay had disastrous effects—which cannot be overrated—on the course of the campaign. For when the German onslaught was delivered on September 1 only 6 Polish divisions were at their war stations, and 17 only were completely mobilized. Moreover, the processes of mobilization, involving complicated train movements, dispatch of orders and reports, and many other factors, were hopelessly upset by enemy action ; some divisions never completed mobilization. In fact, owing to the delay and to early losses, the Poles never had more than 18 complete divisions engaged. The Polish Army at no moment of the war was in its designed shape, and improvisations of all sorts had to be adopted. The distribution of Polish forces given below is that intended but not completed when the attack was delivered.

The German Army, on the other hand, was ready to the last detail. It was organized in two groups, disposed to carry out a characteristically German campaign of double envelopment, to which the shape of the frontiers lent itself. In the north von Bock's group consisted of two Armies: Klucher's Army in East Prussia, of 6 to 10 divisions (2 being armoured), faced the Polish Modlin Army and, farther east, the Narew group, each at first consisting of 2 infantry divisions and 2 cavalry brigades. Kluge's Army in Pomerania, of 9 to 10 divisions (2 mechanized), faced the Polish Pomorze Army of 6 divisions and 1 cavalry brigade. There were also one Polish division and one cavalry brigade watching Danzig, and

Characteristic German Strategy





BOMBER AND BOMBED IN POLAND

Two photographs taken from the Nazi film, ' Baptism of Fire,' which was intended to inspire the German people and intimidate the rest of the world. The top one shows the destructive effects of incendiary and impact bombs. Very weak in anti-aircraft defence, and possessing fewer than 500 first-line aeroplanes, Poland's cities were an easy target.

Photos, Planet News ; E.N.A.

garrisons at Gdynia and in the Westerplatte Peninsula.

Klucher's mission was to engage the Modlin and Narew Armies with his left and to be ready to turn the Polish rearward position on the Bug and Narew, while with his right he was to join hands with Kluge in the direction of Bromberg. With this cooperation Kluge's mission was to attack the Pomorze Army and isolate the Corridor. The mission of Von Bock's group as a whole was to envelop the right of the Polish forces west of the Vistula and, should they retreat across that river, to carry out another enveloping movement farther east. To the left of the Polish Pomorze Army was posted the Polish Poznan Army of 4 divisions and 2 cavalry brigades, but in the first instance it was not attacked, being merely engaged by small detachments.

In the south Rundstedt's group consisted of 3 Armies, and its mission was to penetrate and envelop the left of the Polish front. Reichenau's Army, in the centre (10 to 12 divisions, 6 to 9 being mechanized or motorized), was to be the main instrument in effecting penetration by a drive directed on Warsaw and the Vistula crossings south of the city. On Reichenau's left Blaskowitz's Army (5 or 6 divisions, 1 mechanized) was to cover his flank and to advance towards Lodz. Opposite these two armies the Polish Lodz Army consisted of 4 divisions only, and 2 cavalry brigades.

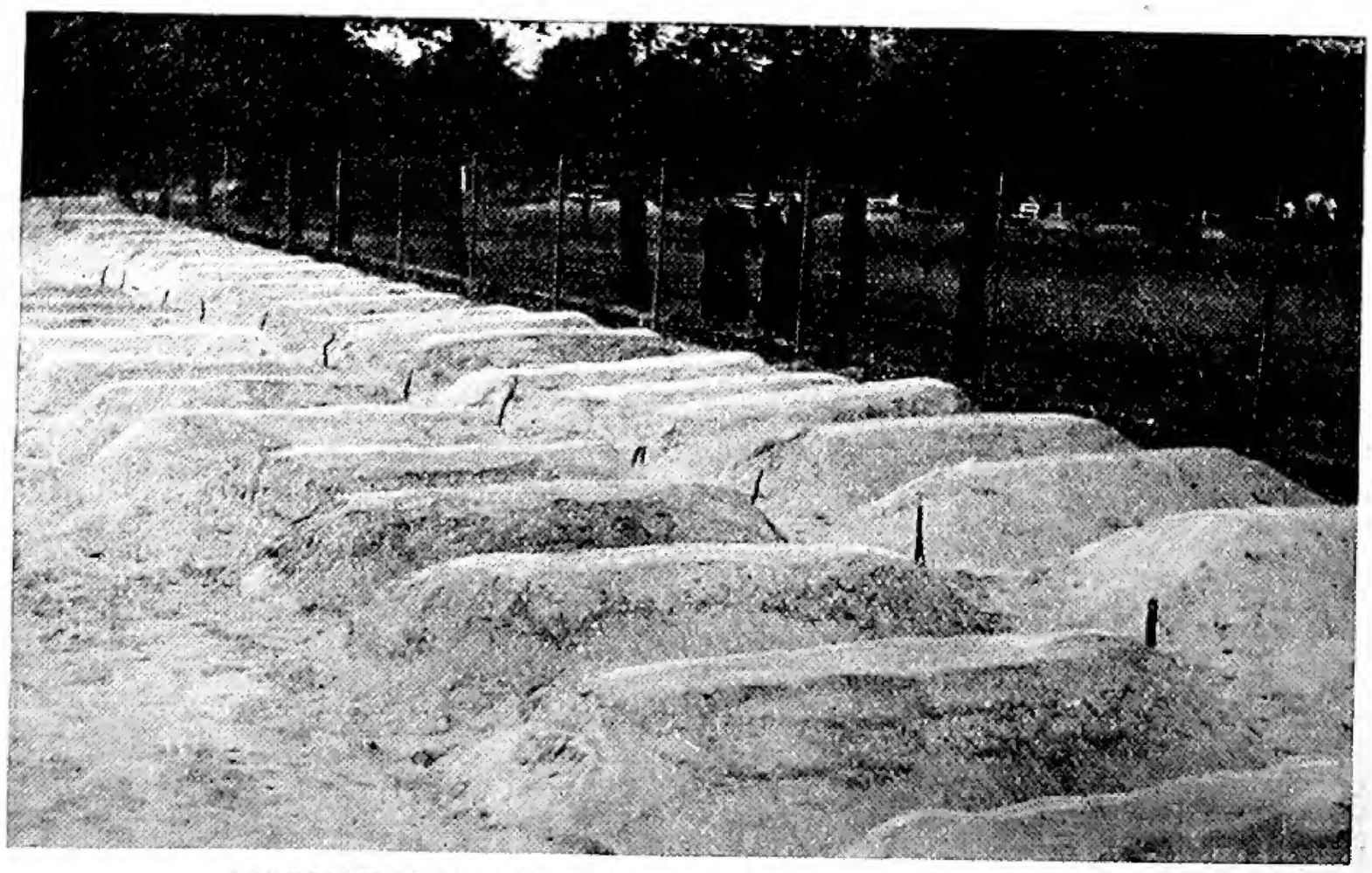
On Reichenau's right, in upper Silesia and Slovakia, List's Army (10 to 12 divisions, 2 or 3 being mechanized) was to attack the Polish Cracow Army (5 divisions and 1 cavalry brigade) and to secure the crossings of the upper Vistula and San; while a wider turning movement by mechanized divisions struck towards Lwow after emerging from Slovakia by the Carpathian passes. To hold these passes there was only the one Polish mechanized cavalry brigade. It was intended to form a Polish reserve army as a counter-attacking force behind the centre, but it did not take shape. Some of its divisions never completed mobilization, while others were distributed among the armies. The overwhelming numerical superiority of the Germans is apparent, but it was all the greater because there were reserve divisions in Germany which in the later stages raised the total number employed to over 70 divisions.



POLAND WAS HAMPERED BY LACK OF MECHANICAL TRANSPORT

A scene near Kock, about forty miles north-west of Lublin, during the last conflict between Polish regular troops and the Nazis. Poland had only one brigade of mechanized cavalry, with a company of light tanks, and many horses were used for transport purposes.

Photo, Polish Ministry of Information



ANONYMOUS GRAVES OF POLISH CIVILIANS

Poland was the first to endure the Nazi onslaught, with its direct attack on civilians, and Polish cities suddenly had to find room, in improvised cemeteries, for many victims of the invasion. It was estimated that more than 1,000 people were killed in Warsaw on September 24, 1939. Later came the dreadful mass executions, carried out under orders of the Gestapo.

Photo, Black Star

Poland's Fatal Weakness

The Poles laboured under disadvantages other than numerical inferiority: thus von Brauchitsch, German Commander-in-Chief, controlled the operations of two army groups, whereas the Polish C.-in-C. had five separate armies under his direct orders. The disadvantages of this centralized control were emphasized by the lack of a good system of communication. Wireless equipment was incomplete and lacked range, with the result that too much reliance had to be placed on telegraph and telephone air lines, which were constantly destroyed by enemy action. The Polish Higher Command in consequence increasingly lost control, till eventually it completely ceased to function. In addition, the line of resistance laid down for the Polish Army was dangerously close to the frontier—seldom more than 50 miles from it—and therefore suffered all the more from the operational surprise achieved by Germany, which caught the Polish Army incompletely mobilized and deployed. The fatal weakness of Poland lay, however, in the fact that her Air Force was hopelessly outnumbered and that she had no

LONDON'S ORDEAL BY FIRE

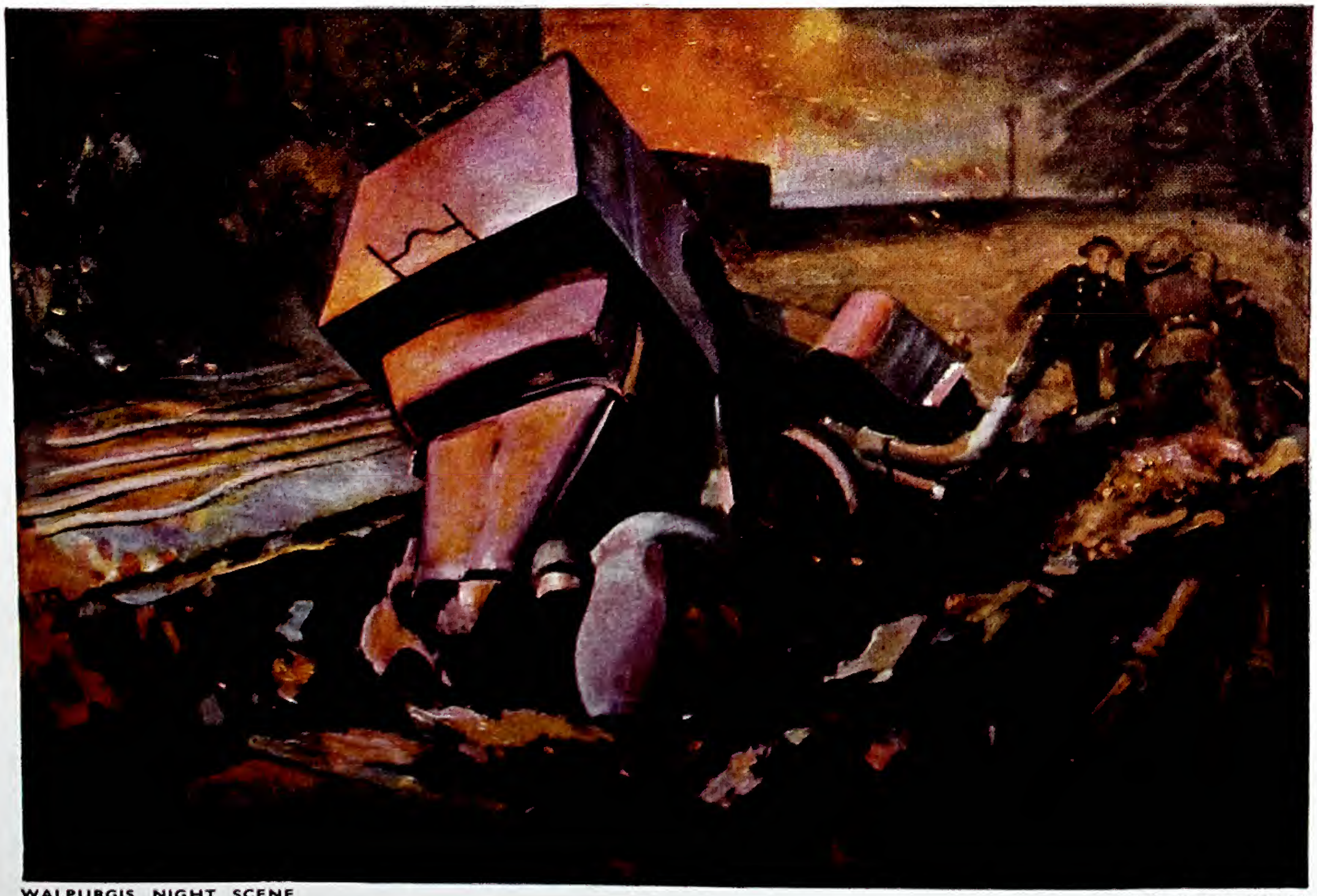
Brilliant Impressions by Firemen Artists

OF considerable historic and no little aesthetic importance, as well as unique in subject, an Exhibition of Paintings by Firemen Artists was held at the Royal Academy in the autumn of 1941. These painters, who were also the defenders of London, expressed the grim drama in which they were the principal participants with stark realism. They defied the bombs and fought the flames. While on perilous duty they made mental notes of striking incidents and effects, and in the tranquil hours between the raids recorded their experiences for posterity. In this and succeeding pages is given a selection of representative works.

Reproduced from direct colour photographs made by the Kodachrome process



A.A. GUNS IN ACTION — J. Wallace Orr



WALPURGIS NIGHT SCENE — W. Matvyn Wright

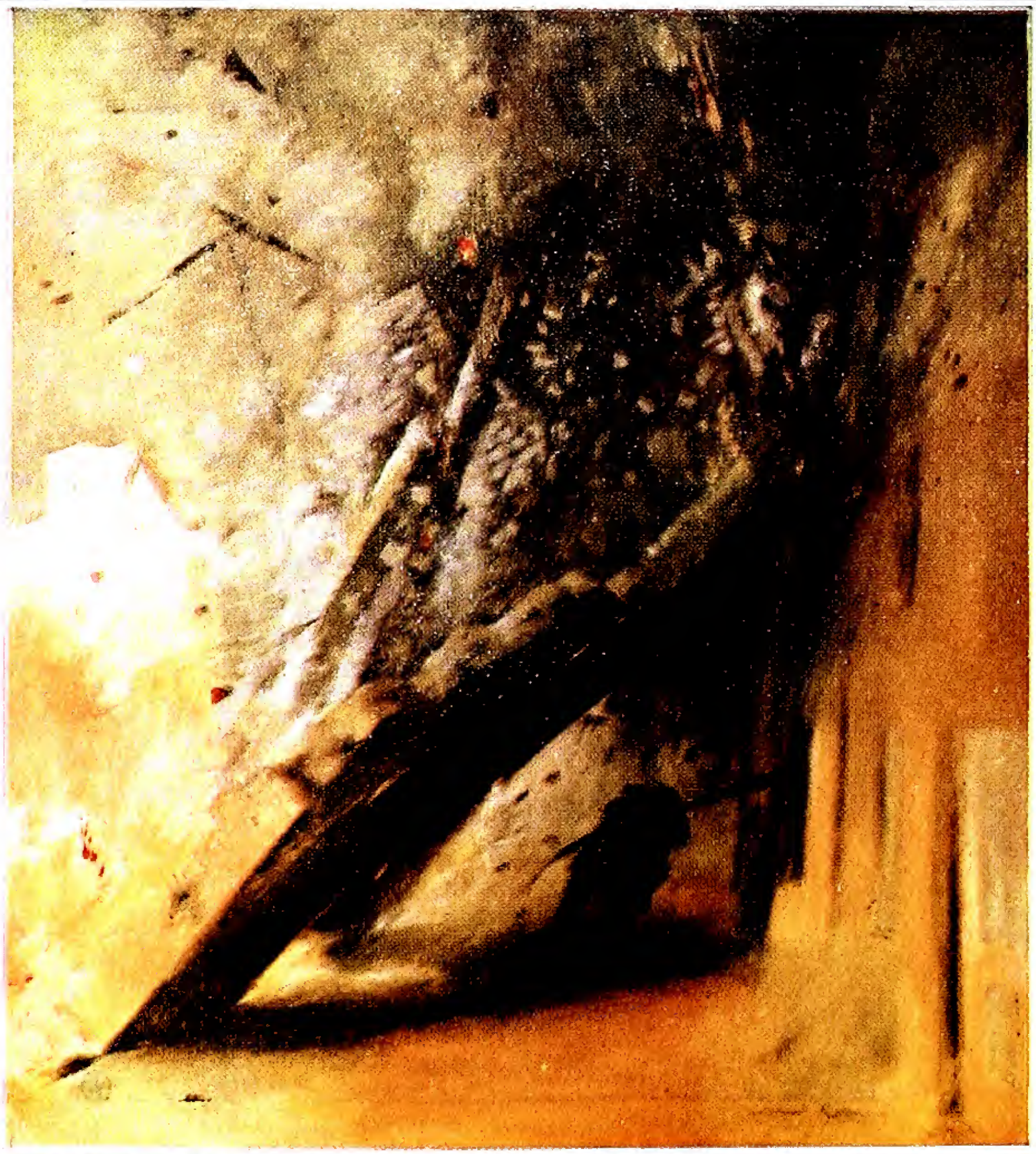


MENACE : I OVERTURE

Paul Dessau



MENACE : II. 'CRESCENDO'



HOUSE COLLAPSING ON TWO FIREMEN, SHOE LANE

Leonard Rosoman

Bought for the Nation's War Records



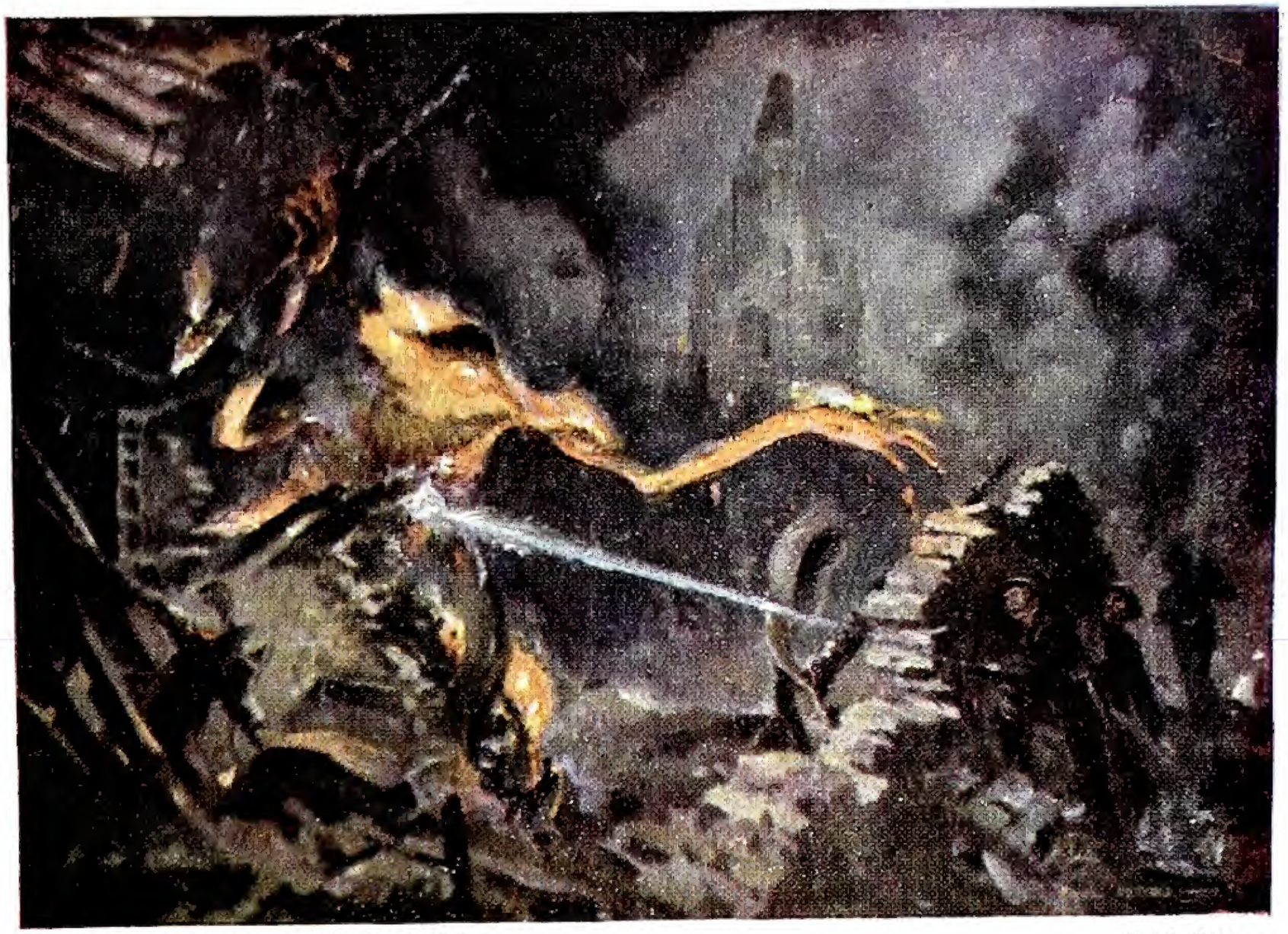
MENACE : IV. 'DIMINUENDO'

The set of four by

USING musical terms for the titles to his pictures, Mr. Paul Dessau 'annotates' in paint the terrific opera of fire. In Menace, I, II, III, and IV, we feel the heat and see the colour of the inferno : the incendiaries first, the increasing flames in the second picture. The hoses have been at work for some time, and the fire is under control in the third picture. The fourth impression is of the fire-demon nearly subdued, the artist symbolizing it as a sprawling figure with charred timbers as arms. This imaginative sequence of four paintings vividly expresses the consuming spirit of destruction that characterized the great London fire raids of December 29, 1940, and April 16 and May 10, 1941.



Paul Dessau



MENACE : III. 'RALLENTANDO'

Paul Dessau



Paul Dessau

esy of James Parish, Esq.

The area of Shoe Lane, off Fleet Street, was reduced to a shambles. During one of the Nazi attacks in May, 1941, a wall crashed down, fatally crushing two A.F.S. men. Mr. Leonard Rosoman has rendered this incident with a vivid sense of the horror of the occasion. A mass of loose bricks and beams are flying about in the section of the falling building. The attitudes of the two men with the hose, trying to shield themselves from deadly danger, are poignantly expressed. In the smouldering ruins of St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, Mr. Bernard Hailstone has depicted a scene familiar to all Londoners at this time, a desecrated shrine after a violent raid.

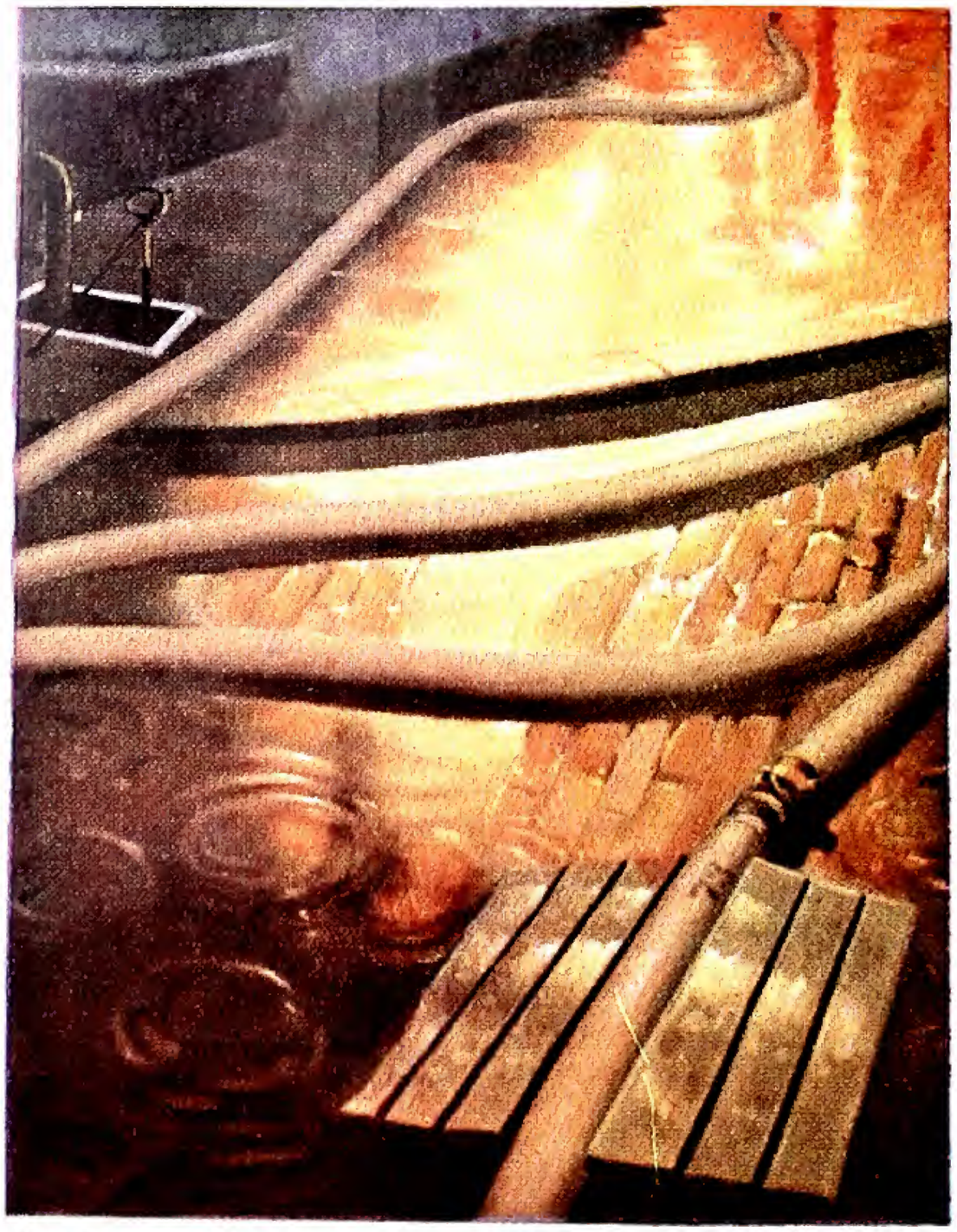


SMOULDERING RUINS OF ST. ANDREW'S, HOLBORN

Bernard Hailstone



FIRE WATCHING POST — W. S Haynes



STREET CORNER — Frederick J. Smith



HOSE LAYING — *By courtesy of the Countess of Shaftesbury* — E. G. Turner

formations which could match in speed or power the German mechanized divisions when they had broken through the forward defences; nor had she enough anti-tank weapons to check their movements.

Except for some of its main features it is not possible in a limited space to describe the course of operations, for they soon developed into a great number of confused and confusing engagements over an area of great depth. Invasion began on September 1 with a surprise attack on the Polish airfields, which established at once complete German air supremacy. About one-fifth of the Polish aircraft were destroyed, and the remainder had to use such improvised and unequipped landing grounds as could be found; lack of petrol in many cases kept them grounded. The Polish airmen fought gallantly and on occasions inflicted substantial losses on the enemy; but their action could not affect the general situation. After destroying the Polish airfields the Luftwaffe concentrated on cooperating with the invading army. By attacks on railways, rear headquarters, refugees and open villages, German aircraft produced chaotic conditions behind the Polish front—interrupting mobilization, deranging supply services, and checking movement of all sorts. In addition, they cooperated with artillery, machine-gunned troops, and acted as the eyes and protectors of mechanized columns, giving warning of signs of resistance. Open villages and refugees were attacked to add to confusion and for moral effect.

Nazi Invasion Begins

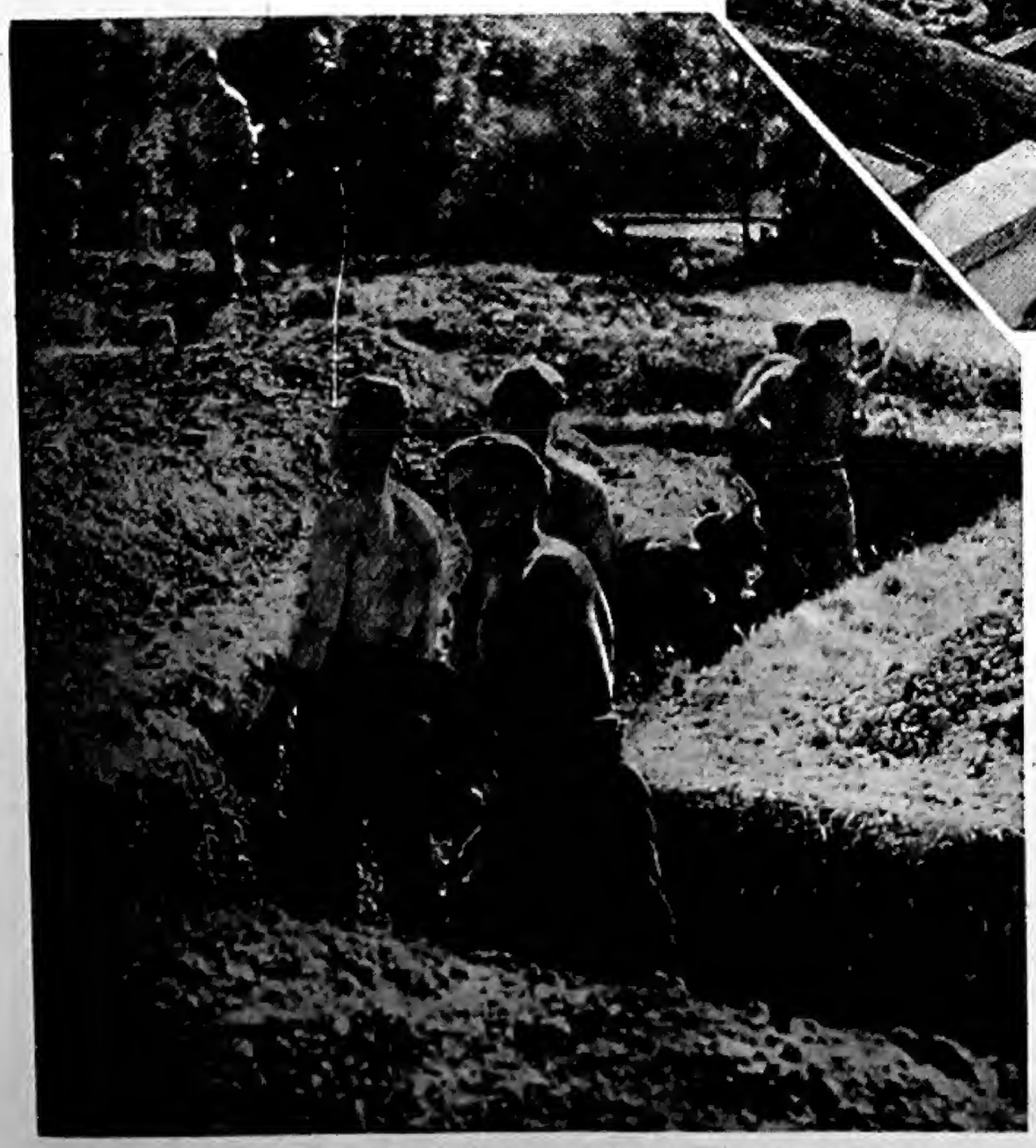
On September 1 the German ground forces confined themselves to driving in Polish covering detachments and finding out the disposition of the main bodies. In the next two days there was heavy fighting, which resulted, in the north, in the junction of Klucher's and Kluge's Armies on the lower Vistula, and in the isolation of the Corridor.

In the south, after hard fighting, Reichenau's armoured divisions broke through the left of the Lodz Army at Czestochowa, and after cooperating in initial attacks on the Polish main bodies they drove straight on towards Warsaw and the Vistula, which they reached on the eighth day, though they were checked on the outskirts of the city. They had met only the resistance of isolated groups, which was easily overcome or alternatively was by-passed and left to be dealt with by the main bodies.

On the evening of September 3 the Polish Army was ordered to retreat behind the Vistula, but intercommunication was so bad that a well coordinated movement was impracticable. The Lodz Army retreated north-eastwards, pursued by Reichenau and Blaskowitz, while in the north the Pomorze Army was engaged in heavy fighting with Kluge on the lower Vistula. The Poznan Army, as yet not attacked, moved slowly, and as a consequence stood in risk of encirclement. To keep its line of retreat open and to check the German advance towards Warsaw it, therefore, on September 10, delivered, with temporary success, a hastily organized counter-attack on Blaskowitz's left about Kutno. But, leaving Warsaw, Reichenau's armoured divisions hurried to take part in the action, while the remainder of his Army pressed northwards to complete the encirclement of both the Poznan and Pomorze Armies. Intense fighting in the Bzura valley followed, which eventually led to the destruction of the two Polish armies, though a part cut its way through to Warsaw.

In the south List's Army had met with strong resistance from the Cracow Army. But the mechanized columns, which had crossed without much opposition the passes of the Carpathians





WARSAW FOUGHT VALIANTLY TO THE LAST

Warsaw fell on September 28, 1939, after one of the most heroic stands in history, under the inspiring leadership of M. Starzynski, the Lord Mayor, and Colonel Lipinski, Commander of the garrison. Top, deserted street barricade after the siege. Bottom, troops dig defensive works in the city's outskirts.

Photos, Planet News; Associated Press



POLAND HAD TO FIGHT WITH OUTMODED WEAPONS

Piled arms and equipment stacked as Polish troops await a call to action. The top photograph shows infantrymen moving up to the battle zone early in September, 1939. Below, Polish cavalry cantering along a ridge to go into action. Lack of finance and industrial assets had made anything like complete mechanization of the Polish armies impossible, and many horses were employed by most of the cavalry.

Photos, Planet News



from Slovakia, threatened its retreat as it took up successive positions on the upper Vistula and the tributaries of that river. The movement from Slovakia (and one from East Prussia which had crossed the Narew and upper Bug) threatened to envelop positions on the Bug, Vistula and San, to which the remnants of the Polish Army were withdrawing in disconnected groups.

In the hopes that with ever-lengthening communications and mechanical deterioration of vehicles the German drive would exhaust itself, the Poles determined to make a final stand on the short front formed by the upper Dniester; with their backs to Rumania, through which supplies might be maintained. Warsaw, Lwow and other places were still holding. They would engage considerable enemy forces, and sufficient Polish troops (whose fighting quality had been displayed in counter-attacks near Lwow and elsewhere) were available to hold the short front. The plan seemed feasible till the Russian invasion, which began on September 17, made it impracticable.

So ended the war which, though fought on such unequal terms, astonished the world in its rapidity. But the world failed to realize that it had seen war in its new pattern, and neglected to take warning. Too much was ascribed to the numerical and material inequality of the combatants, too much to air supremacy, too much to the absence of Polish fortified positions. Too much emphasis was placed upon the deterioration which mechanized formations had suffered as the result of wear and tear. All these were of course important factors, but they did not justify the deduction that the tactics the Germans had evolved could not be effectively employed under conditions less favourable to themselves. In particular, the deep thrusts made by mechanized formations were discounted as mere raids which, even if feasible where defences were strong, could easily be dealt with. Lack of petrol and other supplies would, it was generally considered, leave such formations exposed to destruction. Reliance on the power of defence remained unshaken, and little effort was made to evolve plans for meeting the new tactical developments until they had achieved even more astounding results.



MODLIN FALLS AFTER A BRAVE DEFENCE

Nazi pioneers at the head of a German division entering the Polish fortress of Modlin after its surrender. The Polish Modlin army, posted north of Warsaw along the line of the Vistula, was vanquished by General Klucher's army of about ten divisions, two of which were armoured.

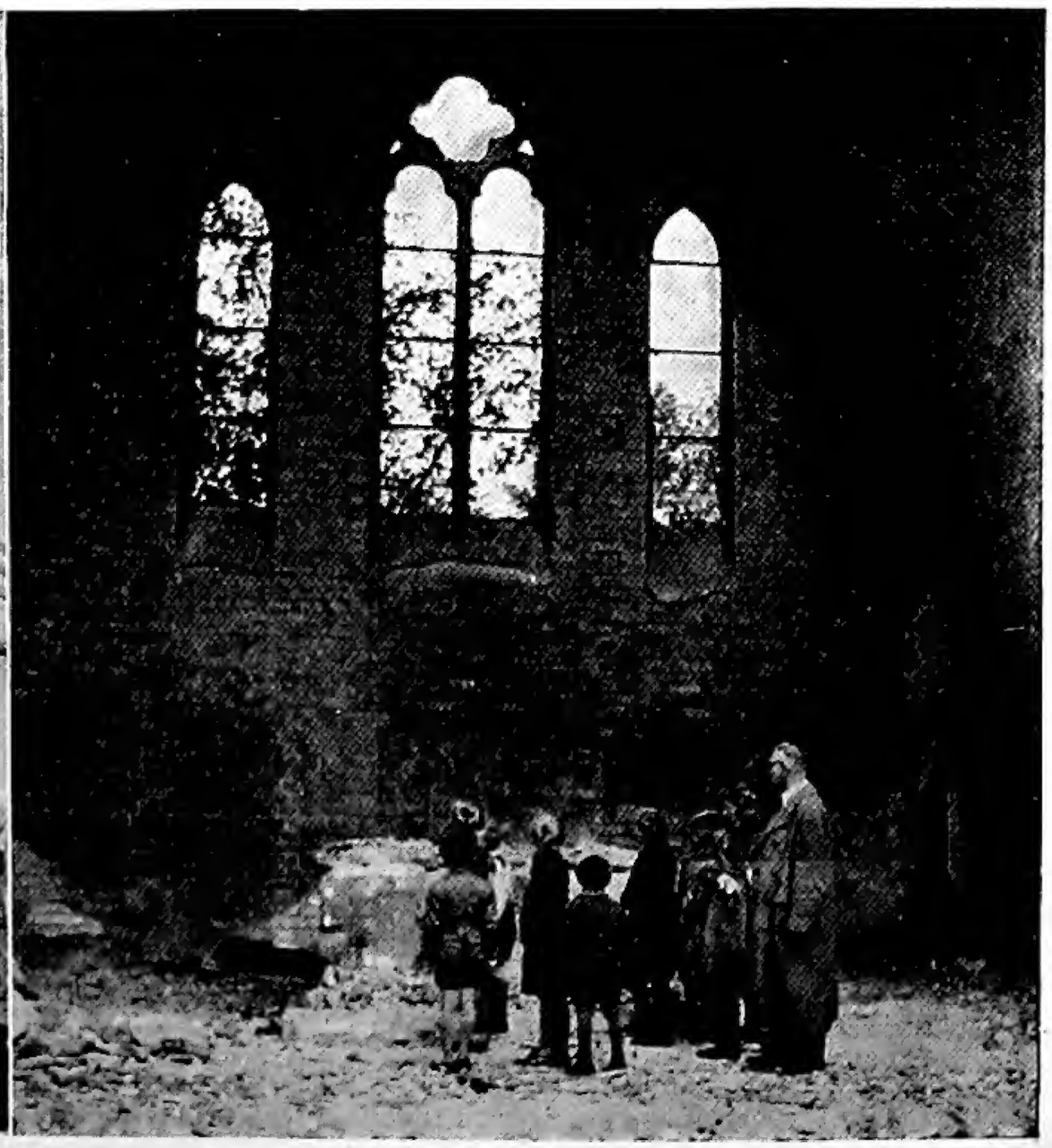
Photo, E.N.A.

THE BARBARIAN PASSED THIS WAY

A church in Lodz, Poland, during a peacetime service, and (right) as it stood after German bombing. The handsome altar and all other furnishings were totally destroyed in the course of the Nazi onslaught. The seat of a Roman Catholic bishop, Lodz had a population of over 600,000, and was the headquarters of the Polish textile industries.

Photos, Black Star





RUSSIAN INVASION OF FINLAND: THE CAMPAIGN OF 1939–40 REVIEWED

In this Chapter Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn amplifies the accounts of the campaign given in Chapters 41, 50, 62 and 74, which were written, of course, in the light of the scanty information then available. Here he reviews the military aspects of the war from the Russian side and explains the basic strategy

RUSSIA'S attack on Finland following the "stab in the back" of Poland and the absorption under threats of the Baltic States excited the sympathies of democratic countries and placed the U.S.S.R. in the category of aggressors. That same sympathy, and the wonderfully gallant fight made by the Finns against an adversary so immensely superior in numbers and material, have tended to obscure the military aspects of the Finnish campaign as viewed from the Russian side. Moreover, the reticence of Russian communiqués and the fact that there were no neutral obervers at Russian headquarters resulted in a lack of information regarding the achievements of the Red Army and the intentions of its commanders. Only towards the end of the campaign did competent observers begin to realize that their earlier impressions of the efficiency of the Red Army and the quality of its equipment required revision, though the gallantry of the Russian soldiers had never been questioned.

Largely because of incidents in the Finnish War, both professional soldiers and popular opinion grossly underrated Russia's military power until proof of it was given later, when she was attacked by Germany. It is therefore worth while to review the military aspects of the war from the Russian standpoint, in order to give its history more objectively and to correct earlier impressions.

Subsequent events have made one point quite clear. M. Stalin's action in Poland, against the Baltic States and, finally, against Finland, however indefensible ethically, was not, as appeared at the time, inspired by a desire to seize a favourable opportunity for territorial expansion and the spread of Bolshevism. Later events made it obvious that the Russian operations were due to fear of an attack by Germany, when her opportunity should come. It needs no stretch of the imagination to conclude that, as a result of information obtained at the pre-war Staff discussions, Stalin realized how unprepared were Britain and France, and that their defeat would leave Hitler free to carry out his long-cherished designs against Russia. Stalin had read "Mein Kampf" and had taken it seriously. He was determined to strengthen his defensive position by throwing back the starting line of a German attack and by securing bases for his fleet outside the Gulf of Finland.

That he hoped to obtain the concessions he demanded from Finland without the use of force, and, even when Finland refused to give way, still believed that resistance would be little more than a gesture, is proved not only by the preliminary negotiations but by the form the first moves in the invasion took.

The ill-equipped columns of poorly trained troops, headed by bands, which crossed the frontier on Nov. 30 might have sufficed for an army of occupation, but could hardly have been intended for serious fighting. Whether it was expected that the Finns would be overawed, or whether Russia overestimated the attitude and strength of the section of the Finnish population that had Russian sympathies is uncertain, but evidently a psychological mistake was made. That mistake entailed serious consequences, for when the Finns showed that they were unanimously determined to fight with all their strength there could be no drawing back. Russia found herself committed to a winter campaign, for which her troops were neither trained nor properly equipped. Moreover, it was essential to carry through the campaign quickly, for not only would the spring thaw produce even worse operational conditions, but with every month Finland was likely to receive assistance from her sympathizers—certainly aid in material of which she stood in special need, and very possibly in the form of powerful contingents.

Russia's Enormous Strength

The disparity in potential military strength between Finland and Russia seemed to make the Finnish cause hopeless, and preponderance of numbers and material must, no doubt, have told in the long run; but it was a different matter to secure a rapid victory. Britain's own experiences in South Africa had shown how a small and gallant nation, exploiting the physical characteristics of their



ORGANIZER OF INVASION

General Meretskov, Commander of the Leningrad military district, was responsible for the planning and strategy of the campaign against Finland. He directed the fierce offensive against the Mannerheim Line, which began in February, 1940.

Photo, Planet News



GEN. SIR WALTER KIRKE, G.C.B.

As head of the British Naval, Military and Air Force Mission to Finland, 1924-25, General Kirke advised the Finnish Government on the siting and construction of the Mannerheim Line, a 20-mile-deep defensive zone on the Karelian isthmus.

Photo, G.P.U.

country and their own special aptitudes, could make a prolonged and often successful struggle against weight of numbers. Apart from disparity in numbers and armament, the chief apparent weakness of Finland's strategic position lay in the great length of her frontier with Russia, and in the fact that the bulk of her population and industrial establishments were concentrated in the narrow area lying between the central region of lakes and the Gulf of Finland. This area seemed especially exposed to invasion, either by way of the good roads and railways which led from Leningrad to Helsinki by the Karelian isthmus, or by amphibious operations.

Murmansk Railway

The weaknesses were not so great as they appeared. On the long eastern frontier Russia possessed only the single-track Murmansk railway to provide bases for invading columns; and between it and the Finnish eastern railway (nearest strategic objective of importance) lay a strip, 150 to 300 miles wide, of difficult country traversed by few and indifferent tracks. Their eastern railway, moreover, gave the Finns admirable lateral communications, enabling them to concentrate against any invading columns which, on account of the nature of the country, would of necessity be slow-moving and of limited size. West of this line were other railways and the great network of lakes, which combined to provide defence in depth. Invading columns based on the Murmansk railway would not only encounter immense physical difficulties, but would have no chance of achieving rapid decisive results. This would also apply to a force advancing south from Petsamo.

For the protection of her southern districts Finland had taken ample



CRUCIAL STRATEGY OF THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE

This map illustrates the manifold nature of the Russian campaign, November 30, 1939, to March 13, 1940. The aim seems to have been to wear down Finland's strength and bring about dispersion of her forces until the final and decisive onslaught could be delivered on the Mannerheim defences. Inset at top shows on a larger scale the defence zone across the Karelian isthmus.

Map specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Harrop*



LEADERS IN THE HEROIC DEFENCE OF FINLAND

The Finnish troops which so magnificently endeavoured to stem the Russian attacks in the Karelian isthmus were commanded by General Ohquist (centre). On the left of the photograph is General Oestermann, Commander-in-Chief of the Finnish Army; on the right is Field-Marshal Mannerheim.

Photo, Planet News

precautions. (*See* the map in page 1507.) On the Karelian isthmus she had constructed the Mannerheim fortified position, which rivalled the Maginot Line in potential strength. Organized in three zones, it had a depth of 20 miles and included many reinforced concrete and masonry works, tank obstacles and minefields.

The strength of the position was increased by many natural features—lakes, wide rivers, and forests; while the length of front of the main zone (some 70 miles) was not excessive for the numbers available for its defence. Against attack by sea precautions had also been taken, and exceptionally strong coastal defences had been constructed. Furthermore, during the winter the freezing of the Gulf of Finland prohibited naval operations, and though in some months troops could cross the ice, yet in the periods of freezing and thaw no communication of any kind could be established.

Finland, then, was a highly defensible country, and though her army was of insignificant size compared with that of Russia, it was sufficiently large to man defensive positions and to put up a stubborn fight. Some 600,000 men were liable for military service, which would mean that at least 300,000 could be put into the firing line. Their standard of training was good and their armament in many respects adequate for the type of operations likely to take place on the ground. The chief weakness was in the air, for not only was the Finnish air force insignificant numerically compared with that of Russia, but there was a great shortage of anti-aircraft weapons. This weakness was of all the greater importance because the Russian air arm would encounter none of those adverse natural conditions which limited the numbers of ground troops Russia could employ. Weather and long nights were the only factors affecting the scope of Russian air action.

In the quality of their troops the Finns had notable advantages. They would be fighting on familiar ground and under conditions of which many had had experience in their war of independence. This applied particularly to their senior officers. Ski-ing was a national accomplishment, and the possibilities of ski troops were fully recognized. The standard of intelligence and of initiative among the men was particularly high, and belief in offensive action well established.

It can well be believed that in view of all these factors Marshal Mannerheim was confident that, provided munitions to replenish reserves and to make good other deficiencies were obtainable from sympathetic countries, he would be able to conduct a successful defence throughout the winter and the spring thaw, after which time he hoped that he would receive substantial reinforcements from the Allies. In view of these circumstances let us consider what was the Russian problem when it was realized that the Finns were unanimous in their determination to resist.

The essential question was, how could Russian numerical superiority best be employed? In the Karelian isthmus there was sufficient room to deploy only a force of limited size, and the Mannerheim Line (which could not be turned or rushed) blocked the way. Farther north inadequate communications and the nature of the country prohibited the use of great numbers at any one point; nor were there in that direction easily reached objectives which would compel the Finns to expose themselves to decisive defeat. Sooner or later the decisive action must obviously take place in the Karelian isthmus, where alone access to the heart of Finland was obtainable, and where the Finns would be compelled to accept decisive battle.

Karelian Isthmus

The solution of the Russian problem lay, then, in compelling the Finns to disperse their numerically inferior army and in wearing it down by continuous attack at as many points as possible

before attempting a decisive attack on the formidable Mannerheim Line.

This would appear to have been the basic strategic conception of the Russian High Command, and though many tactical errors were made in the execution of the plan it was consistently carried through. Subsidiary considerations undoubtedly affected the development of the plan, but the ultimate decisive effort was always kept in view. It does not seem that the Russians ever attempted to crush Finnish resistance by ruthless air bombing, although the bombing of Helsinki and other towns on a limited scale was no doubt intended to shake morale. Persistent bombing of railway and road communications certainly resulted in the destruction of many villages, but on the whole the air arm was not used with German ruthlessness, and fewer than 700 civilian lives were lost as a result of Russian bombing attacks.

In Chapter 41 the eight lines by which Finland was invaded are given. This large number of attacks may in the first instance have been intended to overawe the Finns, but whether that was so or not it evidently fitted in with the Russian strategic plan. In view of the difficulties of the country to be traversed and the lack of important objectives, some of these attacks appeared to be ill-conceived and dangerous operations liable to defeat in detail. It was popularly supposed that their main purpose was to cut Finland in half by a drive across the "waistline" of the country to the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, in order to separate the northern and southern parts of the Finnish Army. That, however, can hardly have been the object, in view of the valueless character of the northern section and the fact that troops in the northern and waistline areas had adequate lines of communication and retreat by the western Finnish railways. The purpose of the attacks becomes clearer if they are considered in groups and not individually, and on the assumption that dispersion of Finnish efforts and the bringing about of attrition leading up to a decisive attack on the Mannerheim Line was their main purpose.

Eight Lines of Invasion



RUSSIA BECAME INVOLVED IN A WINTER CAMPAIGN

It appeared that the Soviet expected to complete the campaign in Finland before the onset of winter, but the stubborn resistance of the Finns thwarted this plan. Here a Russian patrol is advancing through the early snow.

Photo, E.N.A.



WHITE MANTLE OF WINTER BROUGHT CAMOUFLAGE PROBLEMS

Taking a lesson from the animals of Northern climes, many of which in winter are clothed in white, the combatants on both sides wore light-coloured cloaks for concealment. This photograph shows a heavy Russian machine-gun with its crew.

Photo, E.N.A.

The first group to be considered includes the direct advance towards the Mannerheim Line from Leningrad, and the advance towards the north end of Lake Ladoga from the frontier at Salmi. These two attacks were evidently preliminary moves to capture outpost zones and to bring the Russian Army within striking distance of the main Mannerheim Line and its flank extension north of Lake Ladoga. By capturing the outpost zone in the isthmus on Dec. 6, room was gained to deploy troops for the ultimate main attack and for the collection of reserves of munitions. The two movements combined pinned a large part of the Finnish Army to its defences, for the Salmi column threatened to outflank the Mannerheim Line. The fighting, which was continuous and often severe, made heavy demands on the man-power and limited munition supplies of the defence.

Threat to Karelian Isthmus

Associated with the first group was the column which advanced on Suojaervi, for it was probably intended



RUSSIAN TANK CREWS RECEIVE FINAL ORDERS

Here, before a column of Soviet tanks begins its advance, the personnel are told the objects aimed at and the details of the operation. In conditions of secrecy, as far as other countries were concerned, the U.S.S.R. built up an efficient and immensely strong military machine to defend its frontiers. Concurrently there had been developed an enormous, well-organized armament industry.

Photo, E.N.A.

to protect the Salmi column from a flank counter-attack from the north as well as constituting a threat to the eastern railway.

The next most important invasion group included the advances from Kandalaksha and Uhtua towards the head of the Gulf of Bothnia via Salla and Suomussalmi respectively. Although these two thrusts had great distances of almost roadless country to traverse they were a menace to the railway from Sweden, the only line by which assistance from abroad could reach Finland. They compelled the Finns to retain considerable forces in the north to deal with them. The thrust through Salla was particularly threatening, for from Kemijaervi, 60 miles beyond Salla, a good road and railway ran to Rovaniemi, and to Tornio on the Swedish frontier. Rovaniemi was important as the base of the Finnish detachments operating towards Kemijaervi and Salla, and of the detachments opposing, on the Arctic highway, the Russians at Petsamo.

Between the first and second groups the Russians made two other thrusts of lesser importance, towards Lieksha and Kuhmo. These threatened the Finnish eastern railway, which furnished the most direct communication from north to south, and added to the dispersion of the Finnish armies. Finally, the Russian attacks on Petsamo, early in December, though mainly intended to eliminate the possibility of intervention by sea and to secure control of the nickel mines, also provided a base for an advance down the Arctic highway by troops which might cooperate with the Salla force. A Finnish force had, therefore, to be employed to meet that possibility. All these thrusts, with the exception of the first group, may have been in the nature of feints, but for a feint to be effective it must be carried out with vigour and have an apparent, definite purpose, as had especially the movement of the second group.

Earlier Chapters have described the disasters the Russians experienced at Suojaervi and Suomussalmi, in mid-December, but it must be noted that in these operations the Finns had been obliged to disperse their forces and had probably expended more men and munitions than they could well afford. Moreover, an excessive feeling of confidence induced the Finns to seek further successes, which, while not affecting the vital issue, tended to exhaust still more their resources. Even where the Russian columns had been defeated the threat of renewed attempts remained, and those columns which had been merely repulsed (notably the Salla force, which had been well and cautiously handled) were in a condition to take advantage of any relaxation of effort by the defending forces.



DEVOTION TO THE LEADER

A fanatical love for country and an equally strong loyalty to its leaders characterized the Russian soldiery. This portrait of Stalin was found at a Russian post near Suomussalmi.

Photo, E.N.A.

Every credit must be given to the Finns for their brilliant tactical actions, but it is probably true that much of the apparent Russian incompetence was due to the exceptionally hard winter, which produced temperatures that put tanks and mechanical transport out of action, although the petrol and oil supplied would probably have been suitable under more normal conditions. The Russians had practically no alternative but to rely on mechanical vehicles, for animal traction would have made columns slower and more unwieldy and have added to supply difficulties.

Soviet Difficulties

While operations were proceeding on the eastern frontier attention was diverted from the Karelian isthmus, where the Russians appeared to have been stopped in front of the main zone of the Mannerheim Line after capturing the forward zone. It is true that many attacks were made (especially on Taipale, at the eastern end of the line), but they were popularly considered to be costly attempts to prevent the Finns developing offensive operations in the north. That they were costly attacks is certain,

BARRIER ACROSS KARELIAN ISTHMUS

Here are photographs of parts of the Mannerheim defence zone—stoutly defended but skilfully and successfully attacked. Top, Finnish troops going up to relieve their comrades near Kuolemajaervi. Centre, taking up ammunition by sled. The camouflage is interesting : note the white helmet covers ; below, left, a trench has been covered with branches for a similar purpose. On the right, below, is an entrance to battalion headquarters.

Photos, Black Star



but their purpose seems to have been to maintain pressure on the defence, to wear it down and to discover points of weakness. In the Taipale region, especially, the fact that Lake Ladoga and the Vuoksi River were frozen and would bear all traffic might have been a source of weakness.

The chief anxiety felt by the Finns during January on the Karelian front was that the Russians would attempt to turn the Mannerheim Line by way of the northern shores of Lake Ladoga. Reserves were consequently moved to counter-attack the Russians, who had begun to press forward in that direction. The counter-attack was successful, but it exhausted reserves, later to be badly needed. Meanwhile, preparations for a final decisive frontal attack on the Mannerheim position had been in progress, and great reserves of munitions and troops were built up to ensure that the attack, once launched, should be continued without respite. Air attacks on the Finnish line of communication had interfered with troop movements and the replenishment of munitions.

Threat to Karelian Front

On February 3 the great Russian effort started, concentrated on the Summa section of the front, where physical obstacles were fewest and roads and railways facilitated forward movement of guns and supplies. Heavy pressure was, none the less, maintained along the whole front. The story of these events is told in Chapter 62. As a result of weeks of preparation the Russians were able to maintain a devastating artillery and air bombardment day after day, and to launch fresh infantry and tanks in the assault. Gallantly as they fought, the Finns weakened from sheer exhaustion and want of sleep. Casualties multiplied alarmingly and reserves were lacking to provide reliefs. Russian strategy, which had compelled the Finns to expend so much of their resources—men and material—in the north, was justified.

An even more decisive factor was the unexpected administrative capacity of the Russians, which had enabled them to accumulate and maintain the supply of munitions. It was, in fact, this administrative ability which, more than anything else, caused neutral observers to revise their opinion of the Red Army. With a great city close in its rear to be kept supplied, and through which railway communications were limited, the problem of supplying the army in the Karelian isthmus was one of no ordinary difficulty; and winter conditions added to the troubles. It was also apparent that the Murmansk railway, which had to supply all the columns on the eastern frontier, must have worked admirably.

Taking the war as a whole, it is fair to conclude that, although the Finns had shown indomitable courage and superior tactical skill, yet in matters of strategy the Russian General Staff had the better of the argument. They also showed capacity and ingenuity in the tactical employment of modern weapons in the decisive battle. No doubt they owed much to their superiority in numbers and material; but, owing to conditions of climate and terrain, that superiority was not so crushing as the potential strength of Russia seemed to indicate—such superiority as existed in the actual theatre of war had to be intelligently applied.

Perhaps if the campaign had been studied more objectively and less superficially the resistance that the Red Army later offered to the whole might of Germany, assisted by her jackals, might have caused less surprise. That Russia had displayed a new standard of administrative capacity, that her strategy had proved to be far-seeing and that she possessed armaments of excellent design and material might all have secured recognition.

Greater allowances might also have been made for Finnish defensive advantages, for the difficulties of weather and terrain the Russian troops had to meet, and for the fact that the Red Army was not fully mobilized and that many of its best first-line troops were employed watching Germany on the Polish frontier. It must be admitted, however, that considerations of secrecy, which concealed political and therefore strategical motives, and which caused the holding back of some weapons of the latest design, tended to create false impressions at the time of the Finnish campaign.



RUSSIAN TRENCH-BOMBS

A Finnish officer examines bombs used by the invaders in trench mortars; some of the heavier type are provided with revolving fins to steady them in flight.

Photo, Black Star

AFTER RUSSIA SECURED A COVETED NAVAL BASE

By the Russo-Finnish Peace Treaty of March 13, 1940, the U.S.S.R. obtained a thirty years' lease of the port and territory of Hangö, in the island of that name, to establish a naval base. Below, Finnish officers behind the temporary demarcation line face a Russian officer who has come to take over the post from them.

Photo, E.N.A.



Chapter 144

THE GERMAN CONQUEST OF HOLLAND: A REVALUATION

In an earlier Chapter—No. 83—an account has been given of the Nazi invasion of Holland, the first phase of the Battle of the West. The following Chapter is based on later information which has come to hand; particular indebtedness is acknowledged to the 'Short Account of Military and Naval Operations in the Netherlands from 10th-14th May, 1940,' published by the Netherlands Ministry of Defence, and 'The Rape of the Netherlands,' by E. N. Van Kleffens (Hodder & Stoughton)

At nightfall on May 9, 1940, there was little to suggest that the clouds of war were about to burst over Holland. True, for months past there had been rumours of war, and certain special military precautions had been taken, e.g. the completion of barricades on the frontier, the fixing of the fuses in the explosive charges on bridges of strategic importance, the placing of obstacles on aerodromes, main roads, and so on. But outside the immediate circle of the Government and its military advisers there was little concern with the European situation, and even at The Hague it was still hoped that the menace, so often and so long threatened, would be averted.

That evening the Dutch authorities received through their Intelligence Service the message: "Tomorrow at dawn; hold tight." At once the Commander-in-Chief, General H. G. Winkelman, and his two principal lieutenants, Lieut.-Gen. Van Voorst tot Voorst and Vice-Admiral Fürstner, commanders of the field army and the naval forces respectively, were ordered to put into operation the plans against invasion which had already been prepared. In particular, roads and bridges on the frontier were mined or actually destroyed, machine-gun posts were placed about The Hague, and thousands of Germans were rounded up in the expectation, well-founded as it proved, that many Fifth Columnists would be among them.

Shortly after midnight coastguards reported great aerial activity as well as heavy explosions at sea, pointing to the laying of magnetic mines. At 3 a.m. air observer posts reported large numbers of German planes flying over the country. Another quarter of an hour, and there came news that the military aerodromes of Schiphol, Waalhaven, and Bergen de Koog had been bombed. Immediately afterwards it was reported that German troops had actually crossed the frontier. It was not until another three hours had elapsed that the German Minister at The Hague, Count von Zech, visited the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs to tell the Minister, Dr. Van Kleffens, that Germany had irrefutable evidence that the British and French were about to invade the Ruhr from the Low Countries with the connivance of the Netherlands and Belgium. The German Government, therefore, found itself compelled to occupy the Netherlands, and expressed the hope that there would be no resistance, but that the Dutch would accept the "protection" of the German Reich. Only one reply was possible in the circumstances, and that was at once given: "The Netherlands considered themselves at war with the German Reich." As just mentioned, the attack began at 3 a.m. on May 10, with the bombardment and machine-gunning of a number of military aerodromes. Attacks on the hangars caused little loss, since most of the planes had been drawn up in the open alongside, but subsequent machine-gunning rendered many of the planes unfit for action, while the military guards suffered heavy casualties from aerial machine-gunning and still more from the attacks of parachute troops who were now descending in large numbers. Three aerodromes near The Hague—Valkenburg, Ipenburg and Ockenburg—were swiftly captured by the parachutists, and German transport planes filled with troops proceeded to land. Thus it came about that by 5 a.m. The

Parachutists Capture Aerodromes

GALLANT LEADERS OF THE DUTCH DEFENCE

Taken in the summer of 1941, this photograph shows some of the Netherlands commanders in a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp near Troppau. Seated are Vice-Admiral M. J. Van L. Laer; General Winkelman, Commander-in-Chief; and Lieut.-General Baron Van Voorst tot Voorst. Standing: Major-General Van der Bent, Divisional Commander; Lieut.-General Best, Commander of Air Defence; General Baron von Lawick; and another Dutch officer.

Photo, Wide World



Hague, where were the Court and headquarters of the Government, was encircled by considerable enemy forces and almost cut off from other parts of the country.

A little later there were several bombing attacks on the capital which caused considerable damage to non-military objectives, including a maternity hospital and a prison, and some casualties among the civilians. Leaflets, printed on paper with an orange border and expressed in extremely ungrammatical Dutch, urged the town to surrender since it was surrounded, but made no impression. But parachutists and air-borne troops, all too ably supported by members of the Fifth Column, continued to arrive, with the result that the First Army Corps,



HOW HOLLAND PROTECTED HER BRIDGEHEADS

Though hampered by her scrupulous neutrality in the European conflict, Holland had taken certain important steps to safeguard her frontiers and communications. Below (part of the defences of a bridgehead) is a tank obstacle made of steel prongs which could be raised or lowered at will. Above, Nazi soldiers removing machine-guns from a fortified post on a canal after the Dutch surrender *Photos, E.N.A.; Kosmos*



mainly stationed in the province of South Holland and there intended to hold the fortifications of the new Dutch water line (i.e. the eastern edge of the "Fortress of Holland"), became involved instead in a violent struggle, a welter of confused fighting in the heart of the country, especially around Rotterdam and The Hague.

Meanwhile, the Germans were crossing the frontier in ever-increasing numbers. Their attack was threefold: (a) through the provinces of Groningen and Friesland to the Zuider Zee dyke connecting Friesland with North Holland; (b) on the Grebbe line in the centre of the country, and beyond this against the new Dutch water line; and (c) through Limburg and North Brabant in the direction of the Moerdijk bridges, Zeeland and Belgium.

Vital to the success of the invasion was the seizure of the Moerdijk bridges —one a railway bridge and the other a bridge for road traffic—which cross the estuary of the River Maas (known as the Hollandsch Diep), separating the province of South Holland from North Brabant. Unlike the bridges on the frontier, these had not been destroyed on the night of May 9, since it was anticipated that they would be used by Belgian and French reinforcements. The attack on the bridges was made by Nazis in lorries commandeered after the invaders had alighted from troop-planes. They drove on to the bridges and shot down the Dutch guards before the explosive charges could be fired. They were aided by German detachments wearing Dutch uniforms, who had apparently been brought to the scene of action in barges and other small craft some days prior to the invasion. By this combination of force and treachery the Germans secured control of the bridges and so cut the principal channel of communication between the central and southern provinces, although it was not until three days later that Nazi armoured divisions were able to overcome the opposition in North Brabant and pour over the Moerdijk into Fortress Holland.

While the battle for the Moerdijk was going on other German troops landed from the air were fiercely attacking Dordrecht and its bridge across the Waal — unsuccessfully, since the river crossing at Dordrecht was not forced until the end of the five days' campaign. Then at Rotterdam, on the morning of May 10, German parachute troops seized the aerodrome of Waalhaven and were heavily reinforced throughout the day. They extended their hold along the southern bank of the Meuse and strove desperately to gain a strong foothold on the opposite bank, but here again without any success worth mentioning. An attempt to take Delft by parachutists was foiled, all the attackers being killed or taken prisoner. The same fate befell the parachutists at The Hague. They were opposed by Dutch troops who had not been with the colours for more than five weeks—men whom the German Army Command described as "worthless and undisciplined"—yet these young soldiers beat off the Germans, picked men all, and in so doing saved their Queen and her Government.

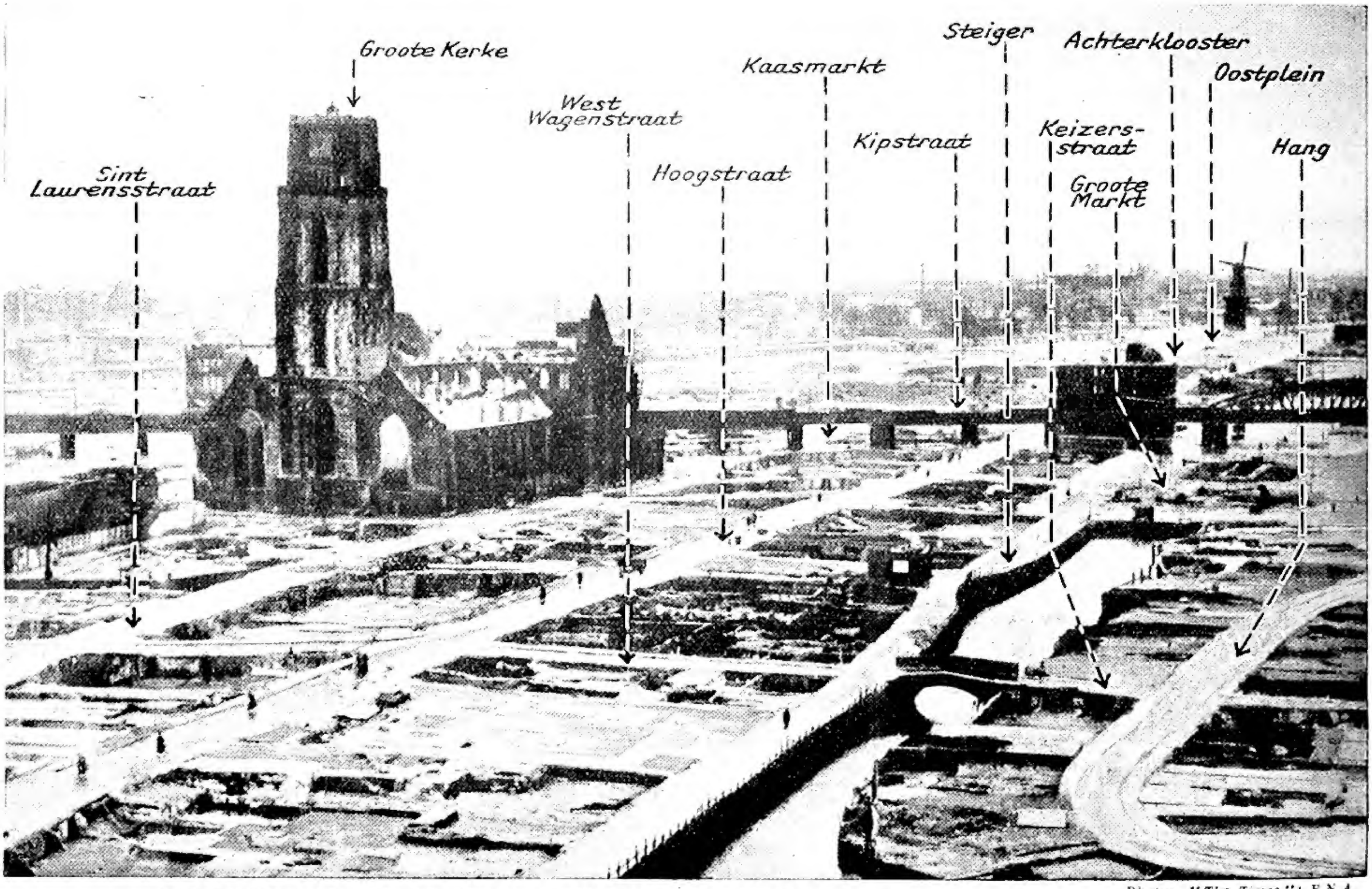
Waalhaven Seized

So far the Dutch resistance had been unexpectedly strong. From papers found on the dead body of the German General von Sponeck, commanding the troops operating against The Hague, it was learnt that he had been ordered to take the Dutch capital on the first day of the campaign, and that on the second day the Germans expected they would be able to bring their armoured divisions over the Moerdijk bridges. In these

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE DEFENCE OF THE NETHERLANDS

This map has been drawn from material supplied by the Royal Netherlands Government in London. The various defensive lines are shown. At the top, inset, is the country around Rotterdam, with the points where Nazi air-borne troops were landed. Another inset, at foot, shows the area devastated by the terrible bombing of May 10-14, 1940. (See also the plan and photographs in pp. 843, 859 and 1516.)

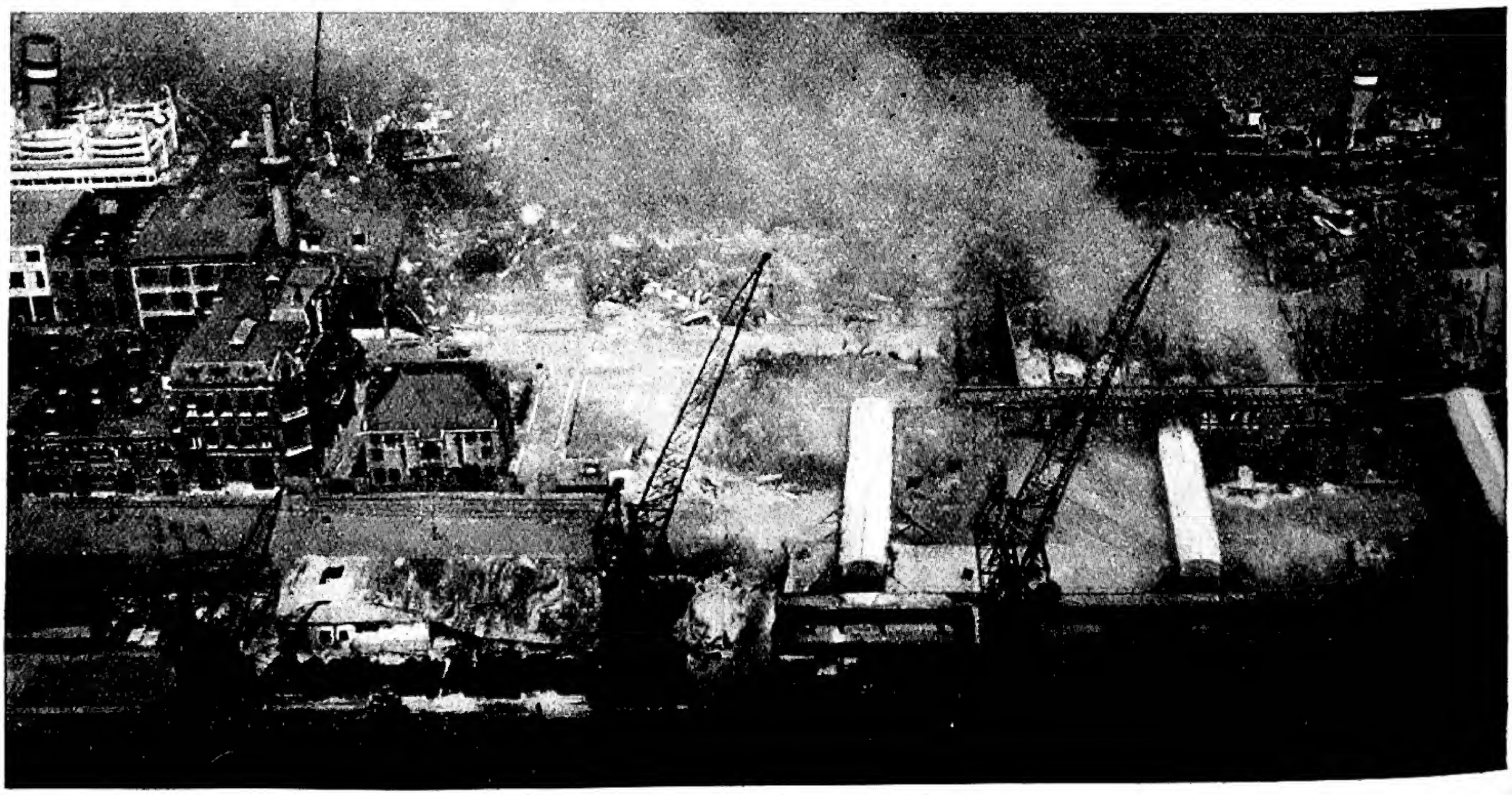
Specially drawn by Félix Gardon



Photos, "The Times"; E.N.A.

DESTRUCTION OF CENTRAL ROTTERDAM ON MAY 14, 1940

In the dreadful aerial bombardment of Rotterdam by the Nazis on the afternoon of May 14 some 30,000 persons perished. Part of the area is shown above after demolition and clearance ; compare with the street plan in page 843. (A photograph of the Tuinderstraat in Rotterdam after the bombing is printed in page 859.) Below, Rotterdam harbour during an air attack. Since the city and port were virtually unprotected the Germans could wreak their fury unhindered.



hopes they had been thwarted, and so the call went out for reinforcements. Fresh waves of parachutists descended in the neighbourhood of The Hague in the late afternoon of May 10, while a number of transport planes came down on the beach south of Katwijk. Unfortunately for them, the Dutch destroyer "Van Galen," which was on her way to Rotterdam, happened to be passing at the critical moment and smashed the transport planes on the beach with shell fire.

But in many a place in Fortress Holland and, indeed, throughout the country the parachutists and Fifth Columnists were working confusion and havoc. The Fifth Columnists, composed in the main of German residents and naturalized Germans, but also of a small number of Dutchmen infected by the totalitarian poison, were disguised as postmen, policemen, tram conductors, even as women and priests, and sniped persistently at the Dutch police and the civilian population. Among them were some German maidservants, who were dropped near their former places of employment and acted most usefully as guides. Papers, sketches and maps found on the body of von Sponeck gave addresses where uniforms and arms had been stored in readiness for Fifth Columnists, and where further instructions would be available. Particularly interesting was a list, no doubt prepared in the offices of the Gestapo, of the names and addresses of a number of people in The Hague, among them some staff officers of the Dutch G.H.Q., who were to be at once arrested. The quislings were also very busy spreading rumours about orders for evacuation and striving to get the people out on to the roads, where they would be a hindrance to military traffic; while at night the traitors flashed light-signals to Nazi planes. One instance of the German use of Dutch uniforms has been already given; another example was at The Hague, where about 100 Germans dressed in Dutch uniforms fell in with a Dutch battalion advancing across the dunes. For a space they marched beside them without rousing suspicion. Then suddenly they opened fire and caused many casualties before they were themselves dispatched. From various quarters came reports of German soldiers seeking cover behind women and children, whom they drove before them along the roads.



WHEN THE STORM BROKE IN THE NETHERLANDS

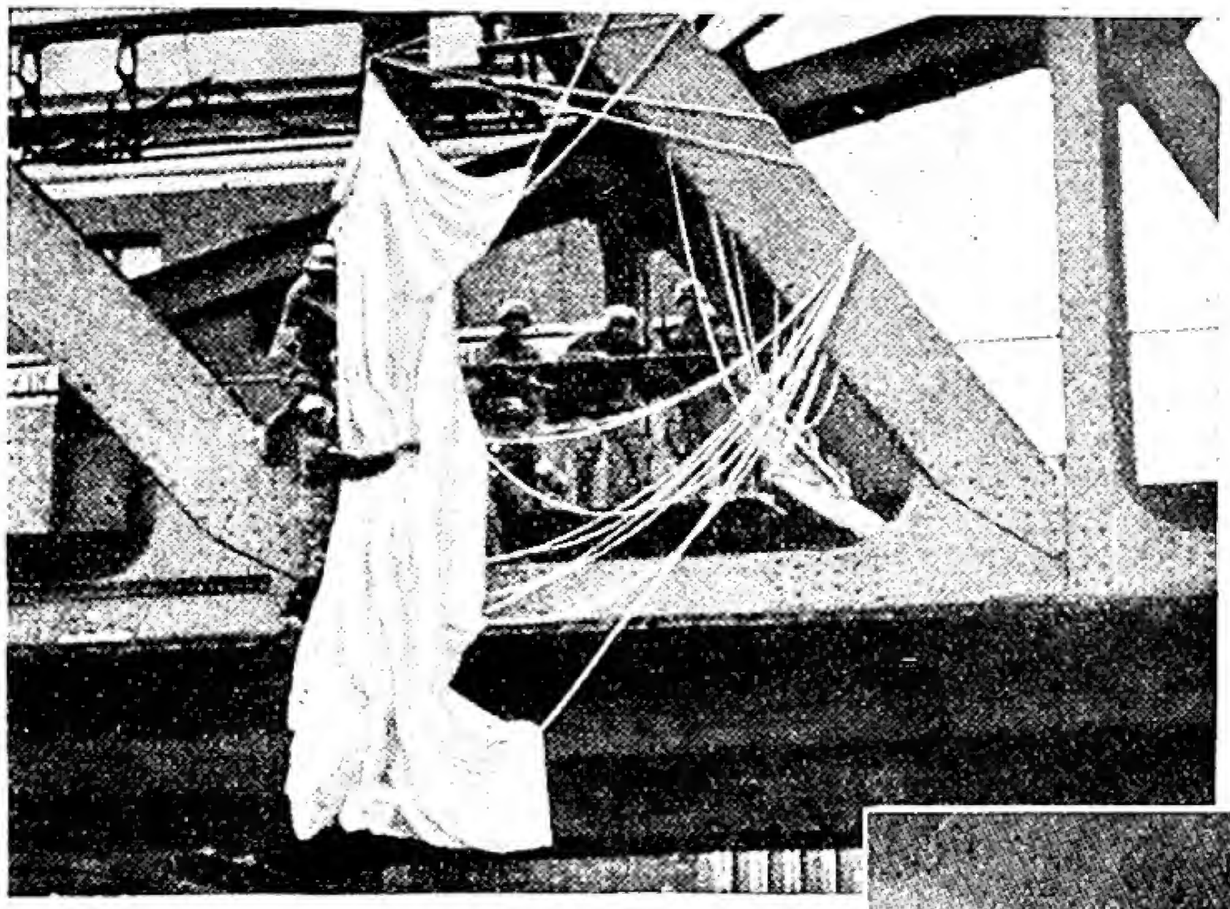
After eight months of suspense the people of Holland awoke on the morning of May 10, 1940, to find themselves attacked by Germany and invaded from the air. Top, a street in The Hague: traffic has been halted and Dutch soldiers line a barrier. Below, preceded by cyclist troops, the vanguard of the invaders pushes on through a Dutch town.

Photos, E.N.A.

During the night of May 10 and the early hours of May 11 parachute troops round The Hague were again reinforced, and again their activities were suppressed. But not before there had been street battles, in which armoured cars and artillery were employed, and a determined attack had been made on the police headquarters, repulsed only with some difficulty. In Rotterdam the invaders had more success. Although the bridges across the Meuse which they had seized were recaptured by Dutch Marines and the torpedo boat "Z 5" and the torpedo motor-boat "51," a fresh wave of Germans, landed on the Waalhaven aerodrome, appeared on the scene; the Dutch, after suffering severe casualties, were forced to withdraw again to the north bank. Since it was obvious that the Dutch had not the force to recapture Waalhaven, a request was sent to the British R.A.F. that it should be destroyed. So on the nights of May 10,

Struggle Around The Hague







SURRENDER OF ROTTERDAM

Below, with white flag, a Dutch soldier signals the surrender of the great city of Rotterdam. For five days its defenders had held out ; on May 14 the centre of the city had been bombed to destruction. Later that day the Dutch Army, under General Winkelman, capitulated. Top, left, a Nazi parachute with ammunition container, entangled in bridge girders ; right, enemy snipers on a Rotterdam roof.



missing, and three wounded, but the remainder landed and continued the fight, both against the by now considerable enemy forces on the south bank of the Meuse and against Fifth Columnists on the northern bank. Such was the menace of the magnetic mines and so huge the number of German bombers that some time, opened fire against Dutch artillery brought up from Rotterdam. So there developed on the fifth day a lively artillery duel across the river. Although this is to anticipate, the German armoured columns which had crossed the Moerdijk bridges and crushed the fighting at Dordrecht were by then in the outskirts of Rotterdam. On the afternoon of May 14 the city became the victim of a ruthless air bombardment. Two squadrons of 27 aeroplanes each, dropping 500-kg. high-explosive bombs and incendiaries, converted the city into a shambles. Thirty thousand people, almost all civilians, perished during this half-hour.

11 and 12 British bombers subjected the aerodrome to an intensive bombardment. The Dutch Navy was also in action against the ubiquitous parachutists; the destroyer "Van Galen" was summoned from Den Helder (shelling the parachutists at Katwijk, as we have seen, on the way), and the gunboat "Johan Maurits van Nassau" was ordered up from Flushing. The "Van Galen" repulsed 31 dive-bombing attacks, and then suffered a direct hit while in Merwede haven and had to be abandoned in sinking condition ; one of her crew was killed, one

it was deemed advisable, following the loss of the "Van Galen," that the "Johan Maurits van Nassau," which had not been degaussed, should come no nearer than Hook of Holland. British destroyers which had now crossed the North Sea were also advised not to enter the Waterweg leading to Rotterdam.

In the great commercial city itself fighting continued for days with changing fortune. Since R.A.F. bombers had rendered Waalhaven aerodrome untenable, the Germans landed their air-borne troops on the parking space of the Feyenoord Stadium. Then on the third day German artillery which had been included in the cargo of a ship flying the Swedish flag that had been in the harbour for

While this struggle, so fierce and strange, was proceeding in Fortress Holland the Germans were sweeping all before them on what might be described as the front.

Retreat to Den Helder

In the north the Dutch forces, in the late afternoon of May 10, retreated in orderly fashion in the direction of the Zuider Zee dyke and, crossing it during the night, took up new defence positions at Den Helder. On the eastern bank they maintained a bridgehead at Kornwerderzand, and this was fiercely assailed by the Germans during the evening of May 12. They were beaten off, and were again unsuccessful the next day. The Dutch were actively supported by the gunboat "Johan Maurits van Nassau," which had now arrived from the Hook ; anchored east of Den Helder, it silenced a German battery across the water 11 miles away and, thanks to the foggy weather, remained undetected by the German planes.

Unable to storm Kornwerderzand, the Germans attempted to cross the

HOLLAND INVADED FROM THE AIR

Though it had been practised by Russia long before, and was reported to be one of the Nazi surprises in waiting, attack by parachute troops took the rest of Europe unawares. It may not have determined the conquest of the Netherlands in the middle of May, 1940, but it certainly shortened that brief campaign. Top, German parachutes descending upon The Hague; by early morning of May 10 this region had been encircled by the enemy. Below, parachutists after landing outside Rotterdam join up with other Nazis already holding parts of that city.

Photos, Netherlands Publishing Co.; E.N.A.



BOMBING OF ROTTERDAM SHOWED THE MEANING OF NAZI WARFARE

In all its nakedness and horror the real import of Hitler's threat to civilization was made clear by the unspeakably barbarous destruction of central Rotterdam on May 14, 1940. In this photograph Nazi troops are seen advancing through the blazing ruins of the Netherlands city. Throughout the German campaign in the Low Countries and France the Luftwaffe was employed to massacre civilians and thus to overawe and terrorize the defenders into submission.

Photo, E.N.A.

Yssel Lake from the little harbours on its eastern shore. To meet this new threat of invasion a force was hurriedly concentrated on the Zuider Zee, consisting of a torpedo boat, three gunboats and two minesweepers, which were sent to join an old river gunboat and a number of motor-boats armed with machine-guns, already on the Lake. At the request of the Dutch authorities these were reinforced by French and British motor torpedo boats, which on the night of May 12 reached the Yssel Lake by way of the North Sea Canal or the locks. A German ferry-boat was sunk at Stavoren by the fire of the ships, but a Dutch gunboat, the "Friso," was sunk by the German planes and another, the "Brinio," was damaged. The latter, however, made for the harbour of Enkhuizen, where it continued in action while functioning as a battery. In this, the first battle to be fought on the Zuider Zee since 1578, the honours went to the Dutch: the dyke remained untaken to the end.

Unsuccessful in the Zuider Zee sector, the Germans swept rapidly ahead to the south, however. The Dutch frontier battalions fought a delaying action against vastly superior forces, falling back to the Yssel line and demolishing bridges and roads as they went. This line, too, was only thinly held (as had been intended), but such was the Dutch resistance that it took the enemy three days to cover the 50 miles separating the frontier from the Grebbe line, the main line of resistance. This was assailed on Sunday, May 12, when a serious situation developed near Rhenen, following an onslaught by low-flying planes succeeded by flame-throwers and tanks. The Dutch counter-attacked vigorously, but on May 13 such was the German strength in tanks and planes that the defences were swamped. Again the Dutch retreated, this time to their final positions behind the inundations of the new Dutch water line, i.e. the eastern front of Fortress Holland.



PRINCE BERNHARD OF THE NETHERLANDS

After accompanying the Royal Family to Britain, Prince Bernhard returned to take part in the fierce struggle in Zeeland. Later he went to France to serve with the Naval forces of the North Maritime Front. Above, the Prince (on left) with a Dutch staff officer at a French base.

Photo, Service Cinématographique de la Marine



CIVILIAN VICTIMS OF THE LUFTWAFFE

After German raiders had bombed Amsterdam: a child killed by bomb fragments. Her father, maimed by the same missile, stands by. The destruction of most of their aircraft on the ground left Dutch cities virtually defenceless.

Photo, Keystone

When, in the days of peace, this situation had been contemplated it had been planned that the First Army Corps should then go into action, relieving the tired troops retreating from the Grebbe. But the First Army Corps (as we have seen) had been heavily engaged from the beginning of the campaign against parachutists and air-borne troops. There were no reserves. The Dutch defenders were sorely battered and exhausted after their fighting retreat. Thus it was hardly surprising that on May 14 the Germans broke through the last line of defence and penetrated Fortress Holland. Already the southern wall had been breached, following the occupation of the Moerdijk bridges. Further resistance was clearly useless, and it was this realization, and not the effect on morale of the ferocious bombing of Rotterdam a few hours before (see plan and photographs in pages 843–4), that decided the Dutch G.H.Q. to capitulate.

We have still to tell of the struggle in the south, in North Brabant and Zeeland. On the first day of the war the Dutch had to abandon the "Peel-Raam" position, since this was rendered untenable by the retreat of the Belgians on their right flank behind the Albert Canal. Yet they resisted bravely and, in those all too infrequent moments when the air was clear of German planes, inflicted heavy losses on the enemy.

Peel-Raam Position Abandoned

Thus the Germans had had to pay dearly for their passage of the Meuse-Waal Canal and the Meuse itself, while all four of their armoured trains which crossed the frontier were destroyed—one near the little village of Mill, after crossing the bridge at Gennep, by men of the Second Regiment of Field Artillery in collaboration with formations of motorized cavalry. A second train blew

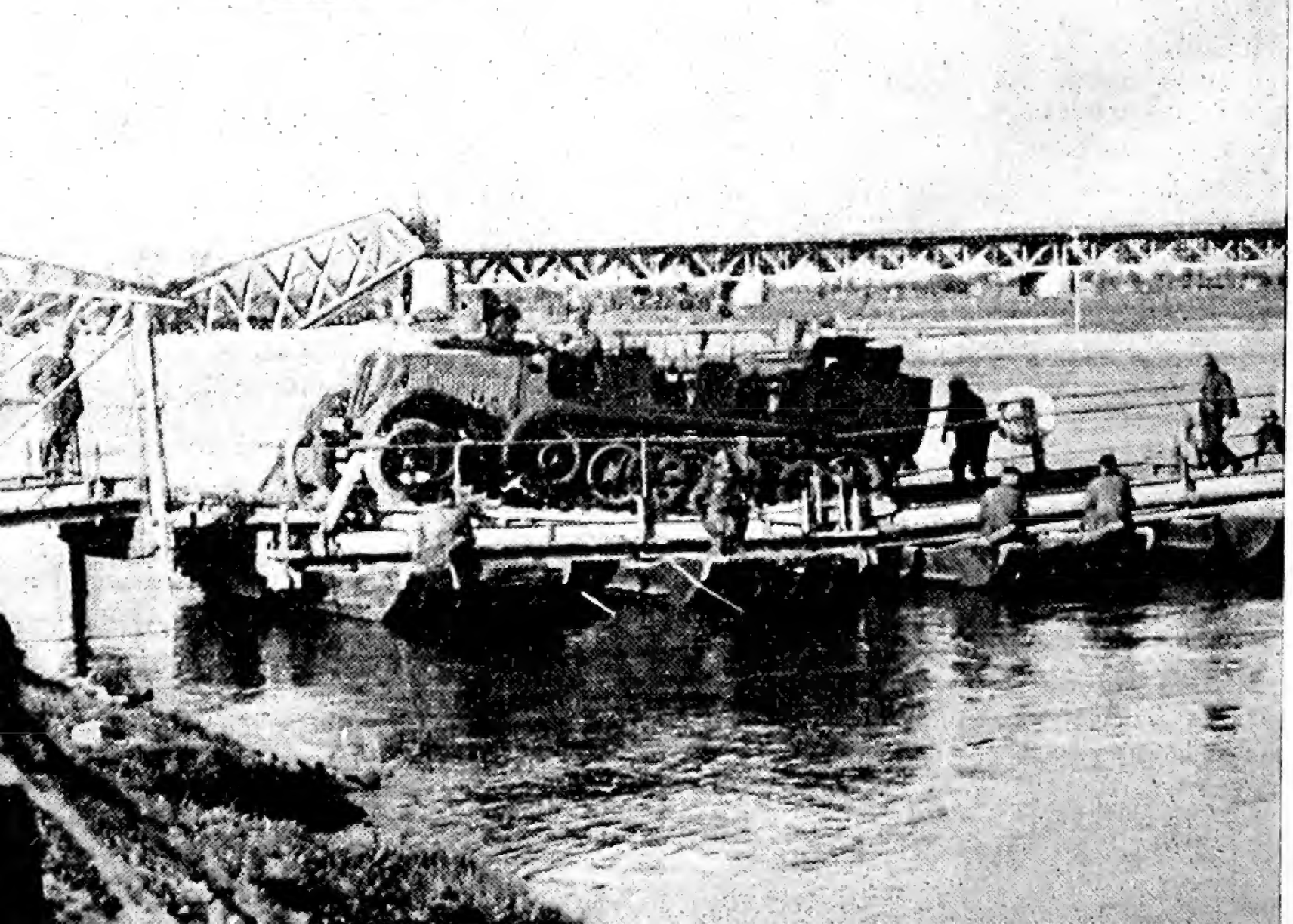




ZEELAND FOUGHT ON

For some days after General Winkelman's capitulation the Dutch province of Zeeland continued to resist. Much of Middelburg, its capital (above and circle), was reduced to ruins, including the 16th-century Town Hall and the old Abbey. Below, Nazi engineers testing a pontoon bridge over the Yssel, built to replace that (seen in background) destroyed by the Dutch.

Photos, Netherlands Publishing Co.; Associated Press; Wide World



up with the bridge at Venlo when Dutch engineers fired the charge. The bridge at Gennep, it should be noted, was the only important one near the frontier not destroyed in time by the Dutch. Though one bridge near Maastricht was not destroyed—an omission which had disastrous effects on the Allied defences—this structure was across the Albert Canal, which nowhere runs through Dutch territory. The three bridges at Maastricht in Dutch territory were all blown up in time.

Pursuing their advantage, the Germans forged ahead through North Brabant and, as we have seen, their armoured columns crossed the Moerdijk bridges on May 14. Still to the west, however, Dutch forces (reinforced now by French troops which had arrived from Flushing and the south) continued a strong resistance. For some days after the capitulation of Fortress Holland on May 14 the Dutch (among them Prince Bernhard) and French in the island province of Zeeland kept up a fierce resistance, ably supported by ships of the Netherlands and British navies.

Some mention has been made of the valiant part played by the Dutch naval forces in the five days war. Their activities were hampered by the wholesale sowing of magnetic mines by German aeroplanes; the river arms giving access to Flushing, the Nieuwe Waterweg, the harbour of Ymuiden, and the anchorage at Den Helder were all greatly obstructed. The Netherlands Navy possessed no minesweepers, but in response to the urgent call British and French craft fitted for this work arrived at Flushing in the evening of May 10.

Dutch Naval Exploits

Two British vessels swept the Nieuwe Waterweg so as to clear the way for a number of nearly-completed warships and for the merchantmen lying in Rotterdam docks. But every morning at dawn German aeroplanes dropped more magnetic mines. A pilot boat and a British ship carrying refugees from Rotterdam were blown up in the Nieuwe Waterweg; in Ymuiden the S.S. "Rensselaer" struck a mine outside the locks, and the old minesweeper "M.III" was blown up. Ultimately it was deemed impossible to get the completed ships away, so they were destroyed. Two new submarines managed to slip through the Nieuwe Waterweg on the evening of May 13, despite the mines, and escaped to open sea. Another example of most useful naval action was the patrolling of the coast by the "Van Galen," Dutch torpedo boats and British destroyers, which smashed a number of German planes attempting to land on the beach and on the water. Just before the final

surrender the surviving naval forces in the north and centre were ordered to get across the North Sea to England. On the way they were repeatedly attacked by dive-bombers, and the "Johan Maurits van Nassau" was lost.

Meanwhile, Queen Wilhelmina and the Royal Family had been an enemy objective. When the German attack began the Queen was asleep at the Huis ten Bosch, just outside The Hague. At 4 o'clock German planes attacked the palace, and in the course of the day wave after wave of bombers came over. The Queen was forced to spend the morning in her bomb-proof shelter, and her situation was rendered precarious when the palace was surrounded by parachute troops who were landing continuously in considerable numbers. Some of the parachutists came down in the very garden of the palace, where they were promptly shot by the Guards. Prince Bernhard manned a machine-gun on the roof and maintained a heavy fire against low-flying planes and snipers. Late in the afternoon the Queen and her family removed to the Noordeinde Palace in the centre of The Hague. But this at once became an enemy target, and the Royal party was compelled to take refuge in the steel-and-concrete armoured shelter.

Bombing of Royal Family

At length, towards 8 o'clock in the evening of Sunday, May 12, Princess Juliana, with Prince Bernhard and the two children, left The Hague in an armoured motor-car belonging to the Netherlands Bank and drove to the harbour at Ymuiden, where they went on board the British destroyer "Codrington" (Commander Creasy). Just as they were embarking the warship was bombed and a magnetic mine exploded in the sea beside it. No damage was done, however, and Commander Creasy put to sea.

On the morning of the next day, May 13, General Winkelman informed the Queen and her Government that he could no longer hold himself responsible for their safety. The Queen decided to proceed to Zeeland, but, as the route was infested with parachutists, she voyaged there by a British warship. It had been intended that the Queen should disembark at Breskens, but before she arrived there news came that the little harbour was being heavily bombed by Nazi planes. So Her Majesty gave the order to sail for England. The destroyer made for an English port, and later in the day the Queen was greeted at Liverpool Street Station in London by King George. In the evening of the day of her departure from The Hague the Queen was followed by members of the Dutch Government. Prince Bernhard at once set out on the return journey and, as we have seen, engaged in the Zeeland fighting.

At 10 o'clock the next morning, May 14, the Commander-in-Chief, General Winkelman (who had been left in control of the country and the campaign), issued an Order of the Day explaining the reasons for the departure of the Queen and of the Government, adding that he had been instructed to continue fighting till the moment when further fighting should become useless—a moment he deemed to have arrived that same evening, when the military situation of Fortress Holland "had become impossible." So General Winkelman entered into negotiations with the Germans for surrender, and ordered the "Cease Fire."

Holland had been overthrown; after a campaign of but five days her army had been overwhelmed and bludgeoned into capitulation. But Holland was still at war. Her Queen and her Cabinet were safe in England, and from the Dutch Indies, East and West, the Netherlands Government continued the struggle.



LAST MOMENTS OF THE DESTROYER 'VAN GALEN'

This photograph, smuggled out of German-occupied Holland, was taken shortly after the 'Van Galen' had to be abandoned. She had repulsed 31 German dive-bombing assaults and then, in Merwede Haven, sustained a direct hit. Most of her crew landed, to continue the fight. Inset: Vice-Admiral J. T. H. Fuerstner, C.-in-C. Royal Netherlands Navy in European waters.

Photos, Netherlands Government Bureau; Pictorial Press

Chapter 145

THE CAMPAIGN IN BELGIUM, A RESTATEMENT: (1) TO THE ALLIED RETREAT

Chapters 145 and 146 prepared in the light of information now available, trace the story of the invasion of Belgium and the eighteen days' struggle that followed. They amplify the narrative printed earlier in Chapters 85-86, and are based largely upon 'Belgium: the Official Account of What Happened, 1939-40,' published for the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Evans Bros., Ltd. This chapter discusses the first ten days' fighting.

JUST as in Holland, so in Belgium, the war began with German aeroplanes circling in a sky just lit by the flame of dawn. The first Heinkels appeared over Brussels shortly after 5 a.m. on that fateful tenth of May, and dropped their cargo apparently unperturbed by the gnat-like attentions of the Belgian fighters. To the wail of the sirens the people of the capital awoke to the realization that once again their country was at war.

To most the invasion had all the force of a sudden blow, but in Government circles it had been long feared, if not actually expected; only in the last few hours, however, had its imminence become certain. On the evening of May 9 secret information had reached the Belgian authorities that the German aggressor was about to strike again. On several previous occasions similar information had been received, and the invaders had not come; this time, however, the warning seemed more certain, and so at midnight the leading members of the Cabinet met King Leopold in the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Spaak, and there consulted what their action should be if the worst came to the worst.

At about 1 a.m. a telephone message from the Belgian Minister at Luxemburg told of clashes between the police and bands of National Socialists, and at 2 a.m. the Dutch wireless announced that aeroplanes from the east were flying above the Netherlands. At once the Belgian Government decided to introduce a state of siege, and ordered the arrest of suspected persons in the eastern provinces. At 4.30 all doubt was dispelled when aircraft were reported over towns in the east of Belgium. Half an hour later the Belgian frontier was actually violated. Jemelle's railway station was bombed, and German soldiers began to parachute on to the great frontier fort of Eben-Emael. Brussels was bombed, as we have seen, shortly afterwards.

State of Siege Proclaimed

Following these acts of war the Belgian Government sent an appeal to the British and French Governments to implement their countries' guarantee of Belgium's independence. At 8.30 the German Ambassador called on M. Spaak with a memorandum from his master. Before he could take the paper from his pocket M. Spaak said,



KING LEOPOLD OF BELGIUM

Constitutionally the Commander-in-Chief of the Belgian armed forces, Leopold joined his soldiers in the field. Here he is seen in conference with his Minister of National Defence, General Denis (left), and General Vandenbergen, Commander of an Army Corps (right).

Photo, Keystone

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Ambassador, I will speak first," and then, in an indignant voice, read a protest his Government had already prepared.

"Mr. Ambassador, the German Army has just attacked our country. This is the second time in 25 years that Germany has committed a criminal aggression against a neutral and loyal Belgium. What has just happened is perhaps even more odious than the aggression of 1914. No ultimatum, no note, no protest of any kind has ever been placed before the Belgian Government. It is through the attack itself that Belgium has learnt that Germany has violated the undertaking given by her on October 13, 1937, and renewed spontaneously at the beginning of the war. The act of aggression committed by Germany, for which there is no justification whatever, will deeply shock the conscience of the world. The German Reich will be held responsible by history. Belgium is resolved to defend herself. Her cause, which is the cause of Right, cannot be vanquished."

Then Herr von Buelow-Schwante was permitted to read his note.

"I am instructed by the Government of the Reich," he said, "to make the following declaration: In order to forestall the invasion of Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg, for which Great Britain and France have been making preparations clearly aimed at Germany, the Government of the Reich is compelled to ensure the neutrality of the three countries mentioned by means of arms. For this purpose, the Government of the Reich will bring up an armed force of the greatest size, so that resistance of any kind will be useless. The Government of the Reich guarantees Belgium's European and colonial territory, as well as her dynasty, on condition that no resistance is offered. Should there be any resistance, Belgium will risk the destruction of her country and the loss of her independence. It is therefore in the interests of Belgium that the population be called upon to cease all resistance, and that the authorities be given the necessary instructions to make contact with the German Military Command."

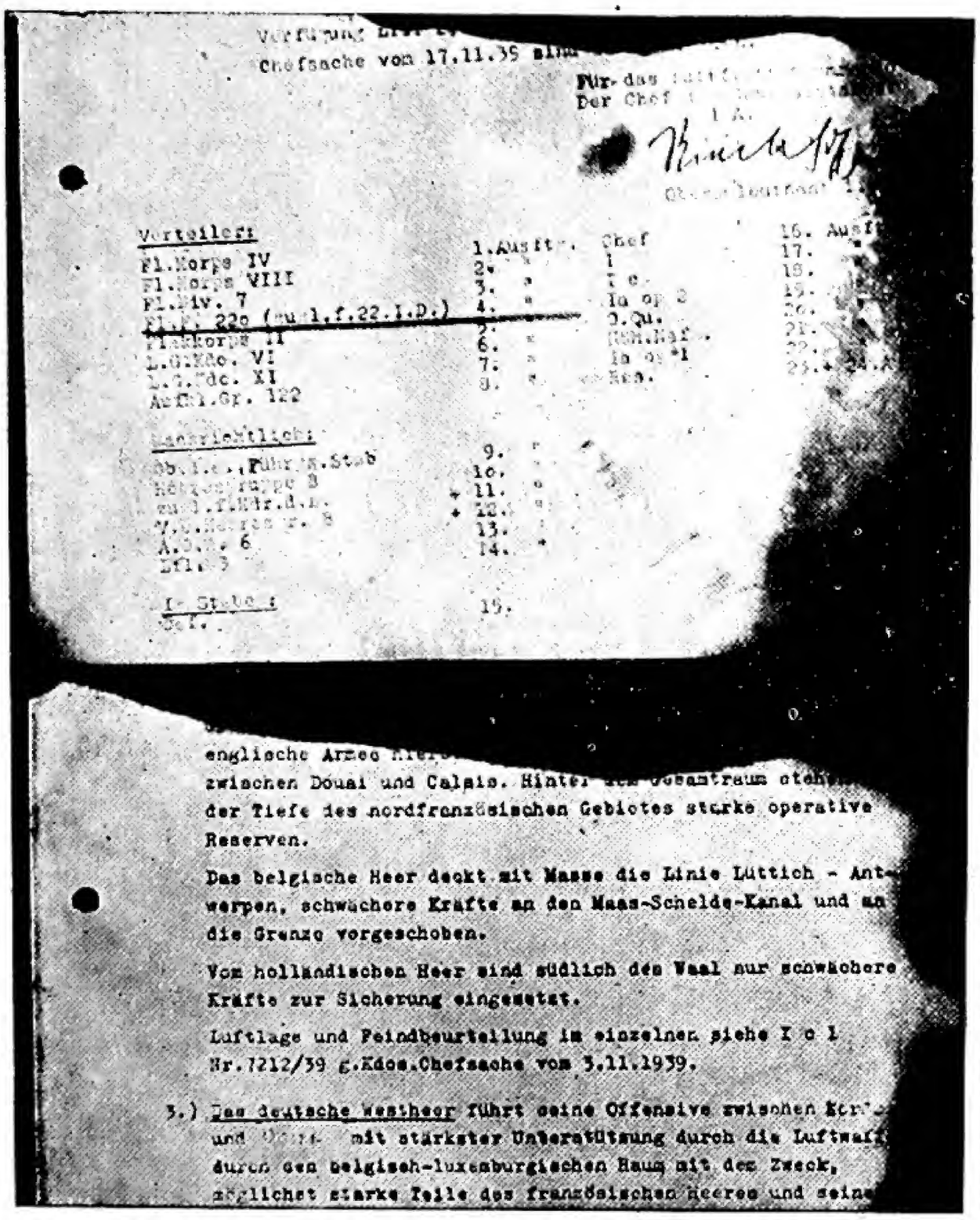
While he was still reading, M. Spaak interrupted. "Hand me the document," he said. "I should like to spare you so painful a task." At this very moment, when Hitler's Reich was offering to guarantee Belgium's territory, Hitler's Luftwaffe was already blasting the way open for his armoured columns, his hosts of infantry.

Leopold with His Army

Shortly there came a nobly phrased message from King Leopold to his people (*see* page 858). Then the King joined his Army, his G.H.Q. having been established at Breendonck, near Antwerp.

Already mobilized in large measure, the Army nerved itself to the ordeal.

It comprised 5 regular army corps and 2 reserve army corps consisting in all of 12 regular infantry divisions, 2 divisions of Chasseurs Ardennais, 6 reserve infantry divisions, and one brigade of cyclist frontier guards; one cavalry corps of 2 cavalry divisions, and a brigade of motorized cavalry; 2 reconnaissance regiments (Gendarmerie); 4 air force regiments: 2 anti-aircraft artillery regiments; 4 army artillery regiments; army troops (engineers, signals, etc.);



Verfügung Ltr. I
Chefsache vom 17.11.39 allm.

Für das ...
Der Chef ...
I.A.

Verteiler:

Fl.Korps IV	1.Ausf.	Chef		16. Ausf.	
Fl.Korps VIII	2. "	1		17. "	
Fl.Div. 7	3. "	I c.		18. "	
Fl.[illegible] 220 (zu I.f.22.I.D.)	4. "	Ia Op 2		19. "	
Flakkorps I	5. "	O.Qu.		20. "	
L.G.Kdo. VI	6. "	Verb.Luftf.		21. "	
L.G.Kdo. XI	7. "	Ia Op *1		22. "	
Aufkl.Gr. 122	8. "	Kdr.		23.-24. "	

Nachrichtlich:

Ob.d.L., Führ.St.b	9. "		
Nachrichtentruppe 3	10. "		
zu d.Führ.d.L.	* 11. "		
W.d.Befehlsh. 3	* 12. "		
A.O.K. 6	13. "		
Dtl. 9	14. "		

I. Stabe:
Gef.

15.

englische Armee ...
zwischen Douai und Calais. Hinter dem Gesamtraum ste...
der Tiefe des nordfranzösischen Gebietes starke operative
Reserven.

Das belgische Heer deckt mit Masse die Linie Lüttich - Ant-
werpen, schwächere Kräfte an den Maas-Schelde-Kanal und an
die Grenze vorgeschoben.

Vom holländischen Heer sind südlich des Waal nur schwächere
Kräfte zur Sicherung eingesetzt.

Luftlage und Feindbeurteilung im einzelnen siehe I c 1
Nr.7212/39 g.Kdos.Chefsache vom 3.11.1939.

3.) Das deutsche Westheer führt seine Offensive zwischen Kor...
und ... mit stärkster Unterstützung durch die Luftwaff...
durch den belgisch-luxemburgischen Raum mit dem Zweck,
möglichst starke Teile des französischen Heeres und seine...

The following document was in possession of a Staff Major of the 7th Air Division (parachutist and transport of troops by air - Headquarters at Berlin) who made a forced landing in Belgium on January 10th, 1940. The Major had been attached to Unit 220 of Troop Transport by Air (Fl.P.220),and, when captured, was flying to Cologne to discuss the scheme at the 22nd Infantry Division headquarters.

D O C U M E N T

Air Force Command Instructions, 2.....
File of 17/II/39 to be destroyed (?).....
pp. the Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force
The Chief of Staff
by order

(signature undecipherable)
Lieutenant-Colonel, General Staff.

TO : -	Copy No.
IV Aviation Corps	1
VIII Aviation Corps	2
7 Aviation Division	3
Commander of Air Carrier No.220 and to 22nd Infantry Division	4
Staff-Commander	5
Chief of Staff	16
Deputy Chief of Staff	17
Intelligence Section	18
Operations Section, No.2	19
A.Q.	20
Officer in Charge of Signals	21
Operations Section, No.1	22
Reserve	23 & 24

British Army here (?).....
Between Douai and Calais. Behind the whole of this zone important operative reserves are held deep in Northern France.

The Belgian Army covers the Liège-Antwerp line with its main force, lighter forces are in position in front on the Meuse-Scheldt Canal and on the frontier.

Only light forces of the Dutch Army are in position south of the Waal.

For weather conditions and information about the enemy : see Ic 1 No.7212/39 Chief of General Staff of 3/11/39.

3. The German Western Army directs its attack between the North Sea and the Moselle, with the strongest possible air-force support, through the Belgo-Luxemburg region, with the object of..... the largest possible groups of the French Army and of its.....

EARLY WARNING OF NAZI INTENTIONS

The forced landing in Belgium of a Nazi staff officer on January 10, 1940, gave plain indication of German aggressive designs. Torn and burned, as a result of the officer's attempts to destroy it, part of an incriminating document found on him is shown at left. On right is a translation : part of the list of officers and units for whom it was intended has been omitted, to save space.

Photo, Keystone

fortress troops ; and services. The total number with the colours was 650,000 regulars, and mobilization brought the number to 900,000 — the largest Army Belgium ever put into the field.

The plans of the Belgian General Staff, made some time before in consultation with the French and British General Staffs in the event of a German aggression, were based on the understanding that British and French forces would be in action in Belgium on the third day of invasion. It was intended that a delaying action should be fought along the Albert Canal, from Antwerp to Liége, and along the Meuse, from Liége to Namur, so as to give time for the French and British to occupy the line Antwerp-Namur-Givet on the French frontier.

Belgian Defence Plans

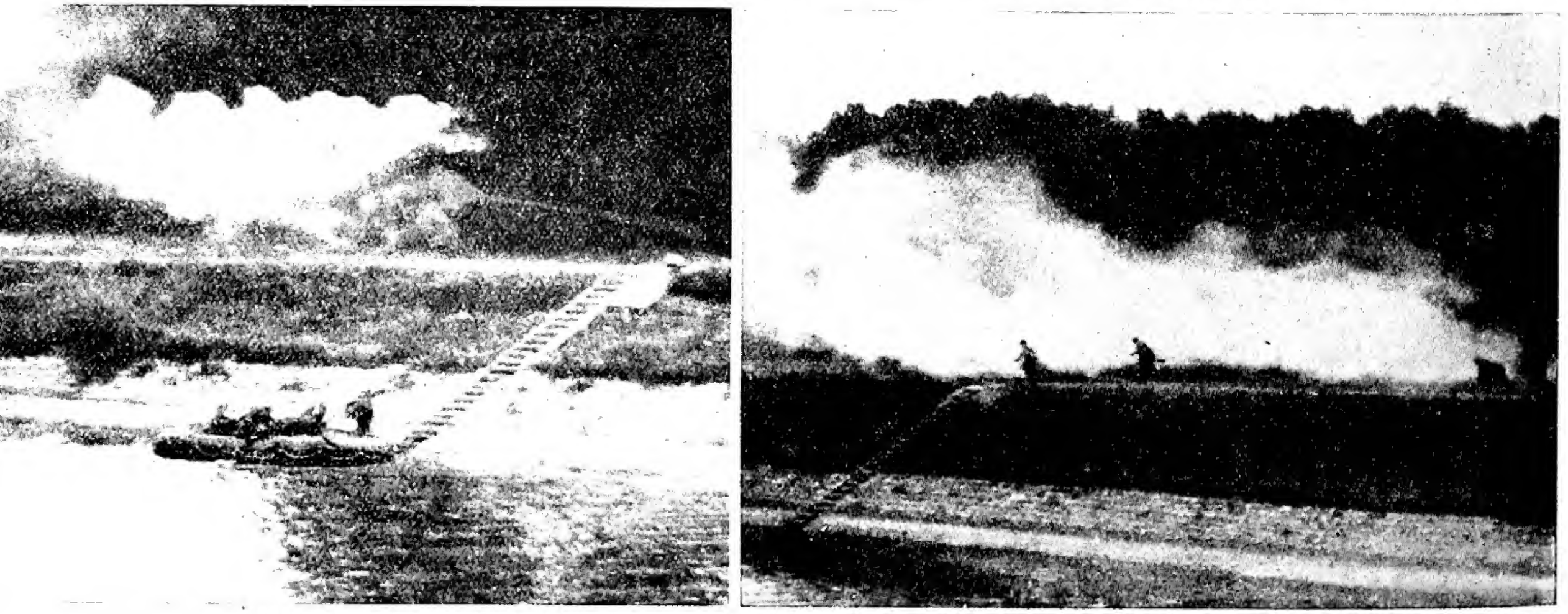
When the Allies were in position—as we have noted above, it was anticipated that this would be on the third day—the Belgians would withdraw to the Antwerp-Namur position, where they were to hold the sector from but excluding Louvain to and including Antwerp. This line, known as the K.W. position, ran from Koningshoyat through Malines and Louvain to Wavre. At ten minutes past twelve on the morning of May 10 G.H.Q. ordered Belgian troops to take up their war stations. At 4 a.m., without any ultimatum or declaration of war, powerful forces of the German Luftwaffe bombed and machine-gunned aerodromes, railway stations and lines of communication. In a brief space the Belgian Air Force, taken by surprise, had lost over half its machines while still on the ground. At the same time, along the whole length of their outpost line the Belgian forces on the frontier were exposed to heavy attacks by massed infantry, tank formations, and waves of dive-bombers. The critical point was south of Maastricht, where the forts of Liége guarded the passage of the Meuse. This was the road followed by the Kaiser's armies in 1914 ; it was the road chosen by Hitler's, too. But whereas in 1914 the passage was most bitterly contested, in 1940 the German success was amazingly swift, astoundingly complete.

In Belgian eyes the fort of Eben-Emael was well-nigh impregnable, yet it was soon reduced by a combination of surprise and daring novelty. Some German gliders landed on the roof of the fort while it was yet dark, and their crews were able to put the defensive armament out of action by explosives and bombs flung through the case-mates. Then, entering through the breaches made in the massive walls, they destroyed the galleries, while at the same time the German artillery pounded the neighbouring batteries, so that it was impossible for them to render aid. Hundreds of tanks crashed over the outer pill-boxes, while legions of parachutists continued to descend into the inferno of war. On May 11 Eben-Emael, strongest fort in the Liége system though it was, fell. Yet other fortresses, less formidable and less powerful, resisted for many days. Surprise and daring did the work—yet there may have been something more. In Brussels the common people, we are told, whispered of treason.

Unfortunately, this was not the only disaster, nor the worst. Great hopes had been rested in the defensive value



German parachute troops and gliders had landed on the fortress of Eben-Emael, and at dawn on May 11 Nazi shock troops cross the Albert Canal in a rubber boat for the final assault. They are protected by heavy fire, and after landing, covered by a smoke screen, they go forward for the attack.



HOW THE GERMANS TOOK EBEN-EMAEL

Strongest of the Liége forts, Eben-Emael was captured by the Germans in a few hours on May 11, 1940, after airborne troops had done their work. The enemy approached closely, mined the walls and disabled the massive cupolas. The gun-crews were killed by grenades flung through openings. The photographs show an attacking party crossing the Albert Canal. (See also illus. p. 853.)

From the German film, "Victory in the West"

of the Albert Canal, but the Nazis stormed across the bridges at Vroenhoven, Veldwezelt, and Briedgen, and, greatly assisted by the fact that the Emael guns were now out of action, managed to secure a footing on the left bank of the Canal on the front held by the 7th Infantry Division. The units composing the division—the 2nd Grenadiers at Canne, 18th of the Line at Vroenhoven, 2nd Carabineers at Veldwezelt-Briedgen—struggled desperately to maintain their positions, and even delivered counter-attack after counter-attack with the purpose of retaking the bridges.

The bridge at Briedgen was, in fact, retaken and destroyed, but the enemy was too firmly established at Vroenhoven and Veldwezelt to be dislodged. Belgian reserves and motorized troops, brought up from the Ardennes, were unable to restore the situation. A squadron of the Belgian Air Force made a heroic gesture of self-sacrifice when it flew over and bombed the bridge at Vroenhoven, but eleven out of the twelve machines were brought down. The appeals for air support to the British and French commands met with no response—at least, not until the morning of May 12, when the R.A.F. bombed the Maastricht bridges (*see* page 806). But it was then too late.

Why were not the bridges over the Albert Canal destroyed? The Dutch claimed that the bridges in their sector at Maastricht had been blown up in time (although in some cases, it seems, they were not completely destroyed, so that their repair presented small challenge to the skill of the German engineers). It has been suggested that the officers whose duty it was to dynamite the bridges in the Belgian sector were killed by German bombs before they could carry out their task (*see* p. 848). But again there was nasty talk of negligence, some said treason.

After resisting desperately for 36 hours the Belgian 7th Infantry Div.—or what was left of it—fell back with the 4th Infantry Div. on its left, to disclose a gap through which the enemy armoured divisions hurled at full strength. Swiftly they stormed beyond Tongres, from where they threatened to take the whole Albert Canal position in the rear, as well as the western fortifications of Liége. On the evening of May 11 the Belgian High Command gave the order to withdraw from the delaying position of the Antwerp-Namur line, and during the night the troops gradually withdrew from the Albert Canal and the Meuse and worked their way back to the main line of defence, which was now being supported by the B.E.F. and the French 1st and 9th Armies.

On May 12 there was a conference between King Leopold, General Van Overstraeten, Belgian C.-in-C., M.

Daladier, French Minister of War and National Defence, General Georges, in command of the North-Eastern Army Group, i.e. all the French and British forces opposite the German frontier, General Billotte, Commander of the French Northern Army Group, General Champon, and General Pownall, Chief of the British General Staff, at the Château of Casteau, near Mons. King Leopold and General Pownall agreed that General Billotte should be constituted coordinator of the operations of the Allied Armies in Belgium and Holland.

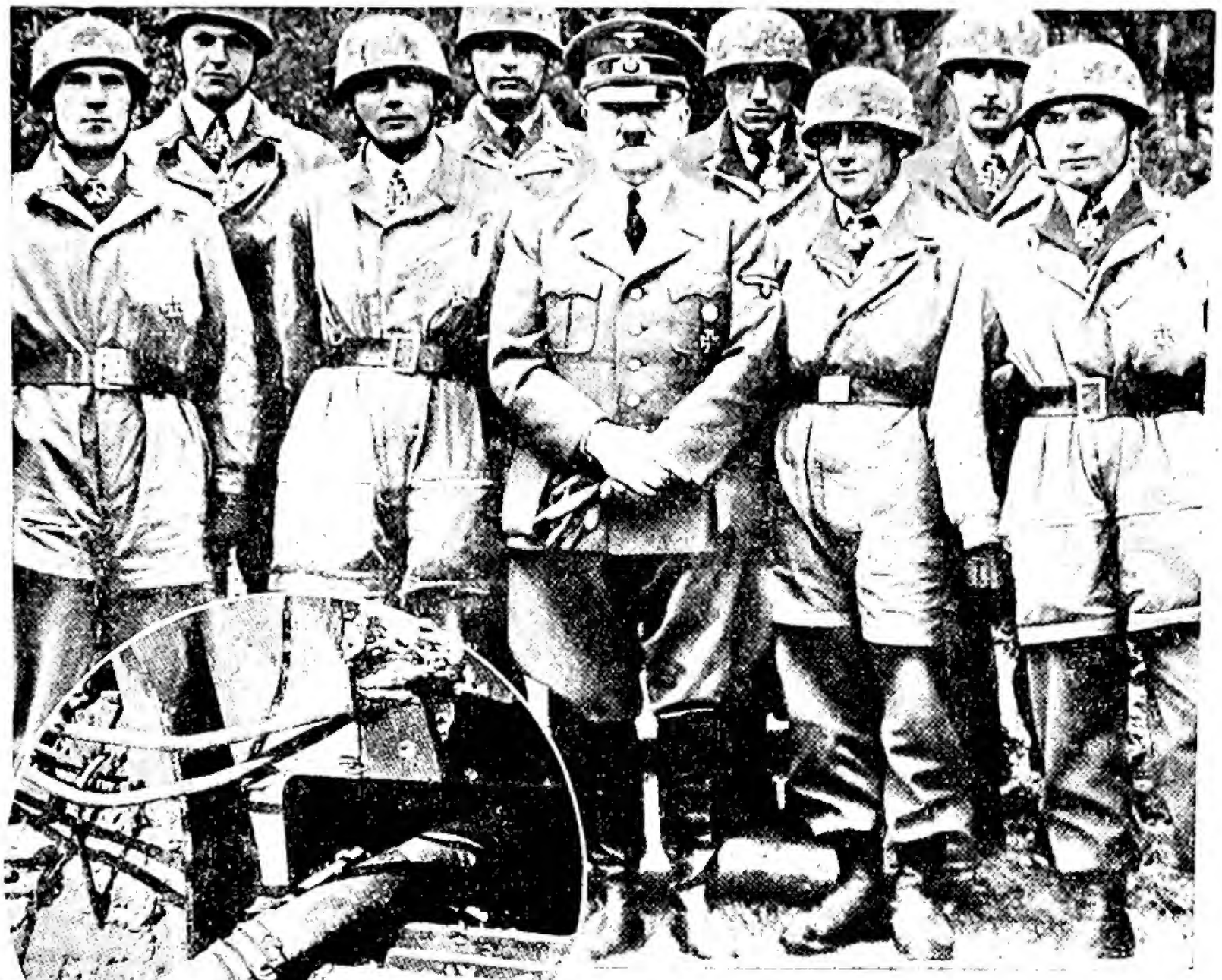
By dawn on May 13 most of the Belgian Army was already in position between Antwerp and Louvain, with the French 7th Army (General Giraud) on their left; while out in front, on the line of the river Gette, were detachments of cavalry covering the withdrawal. At Haelen and Tirlemont there was some heavy fighting, in which the 2nd Regiment of Guides and the 1st and 2nd Carabineer Cyclists particularly distinguished themselves. The fortified town of Liége was evacuated by the 3rd Army Corps so as to avoid encirclement, but the forts, with the exception of unhappy Eben-Emael, continued to fight on under the direction, in Flemalle, of Colonel Modart, who in the siege of 1914 had been one of the defenders of the fort of Loncin.

Antwerp-Louvain Line

At this time the British Army, under Lord Gort, had three divisions in position between Louvain and Wavre, while six other divisions lay behind in the region between the Dyle and the Scheldt. On Gort's right was the 1st French Army (General Blanchard) holding the line Wavre-Gembloux-Namur. Namur itself was defended by the Seventh Belgian Army Corps (8th Infantry Division, 2nd Division of Chasseurs Ardennais, 12th French Infantry Division) and the 1st Division of Chasseurs Ardennais, who fought a delaying action throughout the whole depth of the Ardennes and did considerable demolition work. From Namur along the Meuse to Mézières lay the French 9th Army (Gen. Corap). To the right of this again was the French 2nd Army.

Sectors Held by B.E.F.

The first three days of the war had now elapsed, and it might be claimed that the Belgians had fulfilled their part of the Allied plan. By their resistance on the frontier they had held up the German advance sufficiently long for the Allies to come into line in





DESTROYED THROUGH CHINKS IN ITS ARMOUR

Eben-Emael was assaulted by troops landed by parachute or glider, and by others from across the Albert Canal (see page 1526). Mines were exploded in loopholes and in openings made in the walls; guns were torn from mountings. Centre and bottom photographs were taken shortly before the surrender. Top, just decorated with the Iron Cross, are some of the parachute troops, with Hitler. *Photos, Keystone; E.N.A.; "Die Wehrmacht" (Berlin)*



AFTER THE GERMANS CROSSED THE MEUSE

Amid the wreckage caused by their aerial bombardment Germans set up a light field gun on a pile of debris in a town on the banks of the Meuse. Light and mobile units such as this made swift advances deep into Belgian territory.

Photo, E.N.A.

the main defence system. Henceforth King Leopold's army complied with the general plan decided upon at Casteau. But it was no longer the powerful force which had entered the war so shortly before. Mr. M. W. Fodor, the well-known American journalist, who was in Brussels at the time, has written in The Revolution is On (Allen & Unwin) that when he visited the eastern suburbs on the morning of May 11 he found them, to his great amazement, "crowded with soldiers in full war equipment, loafing in the public thoroughfares, surrounded by large, curious crowds. The fugitive soldiers were spreading the tale of defeat, nay more, of a catastrophe; and by exaggerating the magnitude of the defeat they helped to create further uneasiness, bordering on panic, amongst the Brussels population, who were already terrified by the constant bombardment by German planes." So bad was the state of affairs that he described it as another Caporetto.

Undoubtedly the chief reason for this demoralization—if the word may be permitted—was the enormous superiority of the German Air Force. Between 1,000 and 2,000 German planes, declared Belgian officers, were unloading their bombs over the Belgian Army in the course of the war's first day. Against them the Belgians could do next to nothing in the air, and the Allies had, it would seem, no aeroplanes to spare. "For 18 days," says the Belgian official record, "the Belgian Army had the depressing feeling that it was manoeuvring and fighting under a sky that belonged exclusively to the enemy."

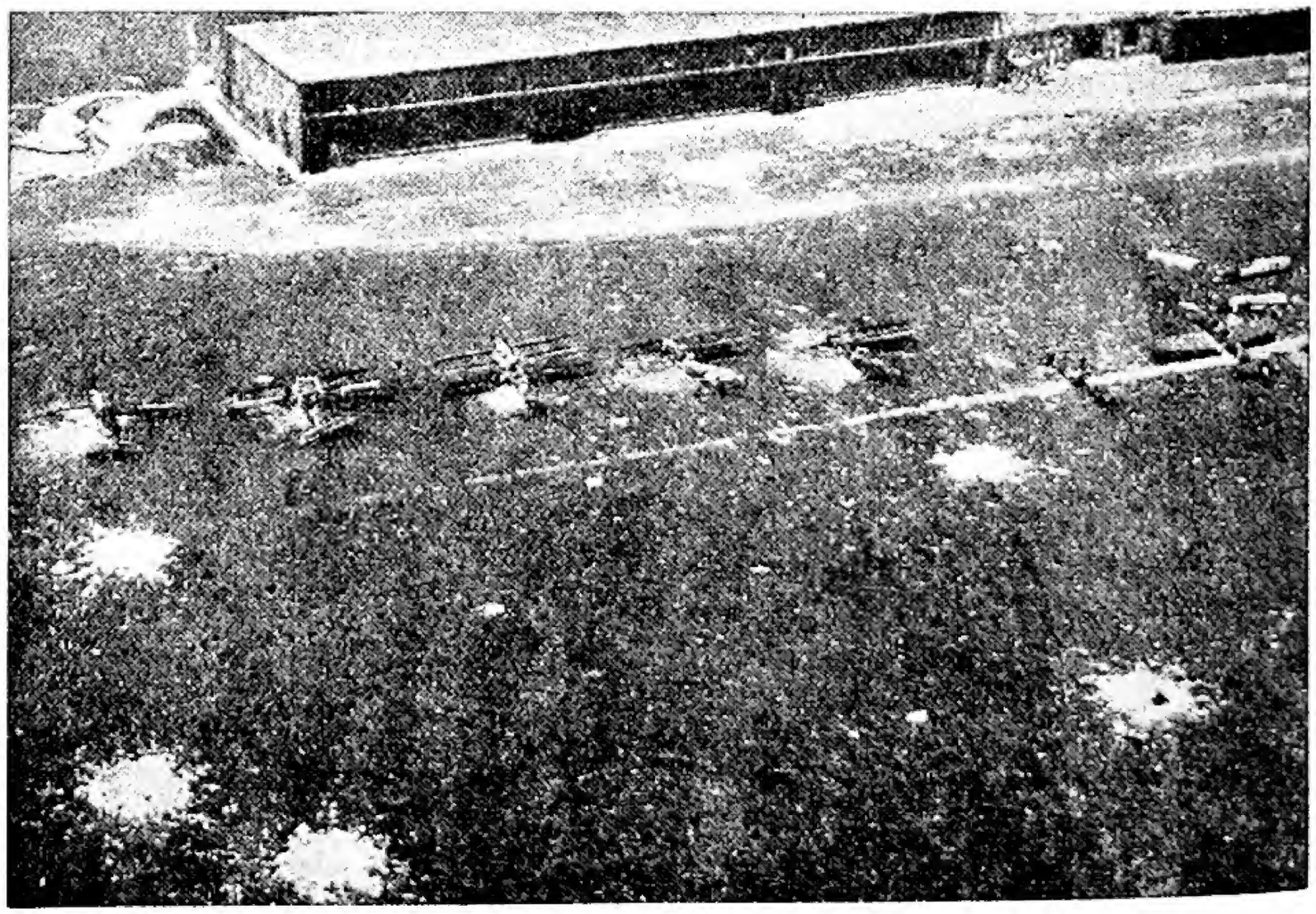
Enemy Held the Sky

Now there came fresh disasters. The Ardennes sector, rough hilly country with thick woods and winding rivers, would hold up the Germans, it had been anticipated, for quite a time; in fact, however, it was overrun in 48 hours. Then the French 9th Army was still trickling into its positions on the Meuse south of Namur, when, on May 12, the Germans approached. To the enemy's delighted surprise they found that six bridges across the river had not been blown up, and over these bridges, through a breach 50 miles wide and 50 miles deep, they poured their motorized and armoured troops.

"Is it to be wondered that the word 'treason' was now whispered amongst the poilus, in the cafés of Sedan, in the restaurants of Lille?" writes Fodor. "And it *was* treason. Even if the entire staff of General Corap can whitewash themselves from the charge of actual treason, their action, for all practical purposes, was treason to their country. They failed to carry through a minutely drafted defence plan of the French general staff. They failed to organize their units properly; they failed to observe that vigilance which is the first commandment of all army officers.

"It will be difficult to erase the belief, firmly fixed amongst the French troops of the Ninth Army and whispered all over Northern France, that treason, probably actual bribery of some officers, or of one staff officer (these were the versions related at the time in those parts), was the cause of the débâcle on the Meuse.

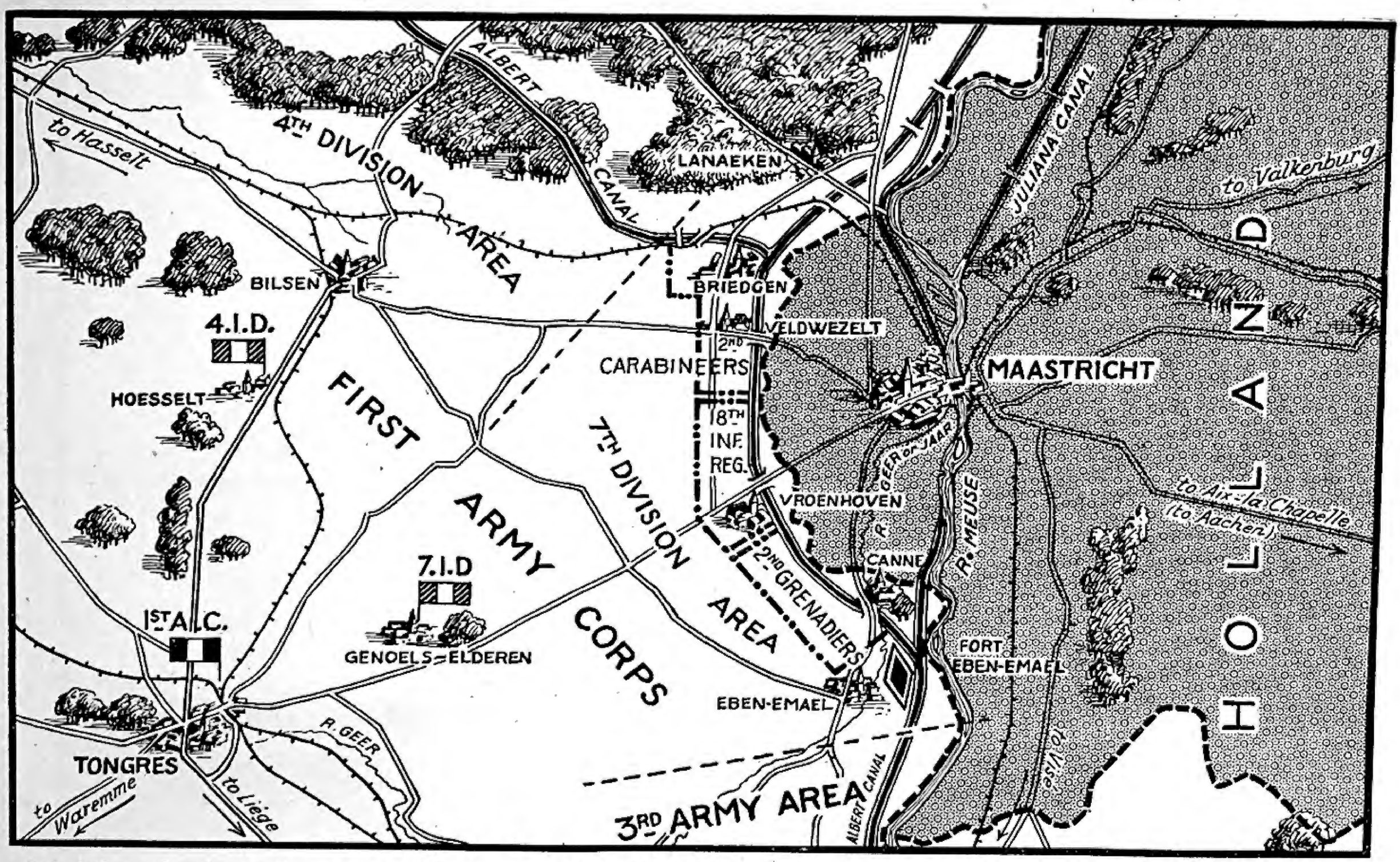
"With the bridges undynamited, only one defence remained: metal against metal, either in the form of anti-tank guns with proper armour-piercing shells, or the actual opposition of other tanks. But where were the French armoured divisions? Where were the French tanks, the French anti-tank guns? France had hardly any. . . Valiantly the French infantry



BELGIAN AIRCRAFT WERE CAUGHT NAPPING

Much of the initial success of the Nazi invasion was due to surprise attacks on aerodromes, in which many Belgian aircraft were destroyed on the ground. This photograph shows a row of aeroplanes hit by accurate bombing.

Photo, E.N.A.



DEFENCE OF ALBERT CANAL BRIDGES, MAY 10, 1940

The Belgian plan in the event of invasion was to take up a delaying position along the Albert Canal. This map shows the line defended by the Belgian 7th Division, covering vital bridge-heads, in the Maastricht area, on May 10. **(See text, p. 1526.)**

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*

died before the devastating fire of the German tanks and low-flying aeroplanes. The few motorized units of the French army were quickly reduced to old junk—sometimes less than a hundred men of a motorized column survived the German assault. Heroically they tried to resume resistance, but in vain. The unblown bridges did their duty. . . ."

On May 15 Corap was dismissed his command, and Gen. Giraud took over the 9th Army

Then it was the turn of the French 2nd Army. A tremendous assault was delivered on its front at Sedan, and at 5 p.m. on May 13 the front was breached. Perhaps it was just a lucky discovery on the Germans' part, this locating of a soft spot; perhaps, on the other hand, it had been the German intention all along to strike hard at where the Maginot Line came to an end—in which case the attack to the north of the Meuse had been just a blind, designed to draw the B.E.F. and the French forces from their carefully prepared positions on the Franco-Belgian frontier. If this was the intention, then it succeeded all too well.

Following the German break-through at Sedan, the French 9th Army was dissolved in a hopeless rout; General Giraud himself was captured on May 16 at La Capelle. (*See* illus. page 856.) Another inevitable consequence was the withdrawal of the Allied troops in Belgium, since their whole position was now threatened and they were in danger of envelopment. On the evening of May 15 General Georges ordered the abandonment of the Antwerp-Namur position and a withdrawal behind the Scheldt (Escaut); in other words, a powerfully organized defence position was abandoned in favour of one which was not even improvised. The 7th Belgian Army Corps (General Deffontaine) withdrew from Namur, which had suffered heavily from Nazi shells and bombs, although the forts continued for some time yet to maintain their fire. Thus Marchovelette fell on May 18, Suarlee on the 19th, St. Heribert and Malonne on the 21st, Dave, Maizeret and Andoy on the 23rd.



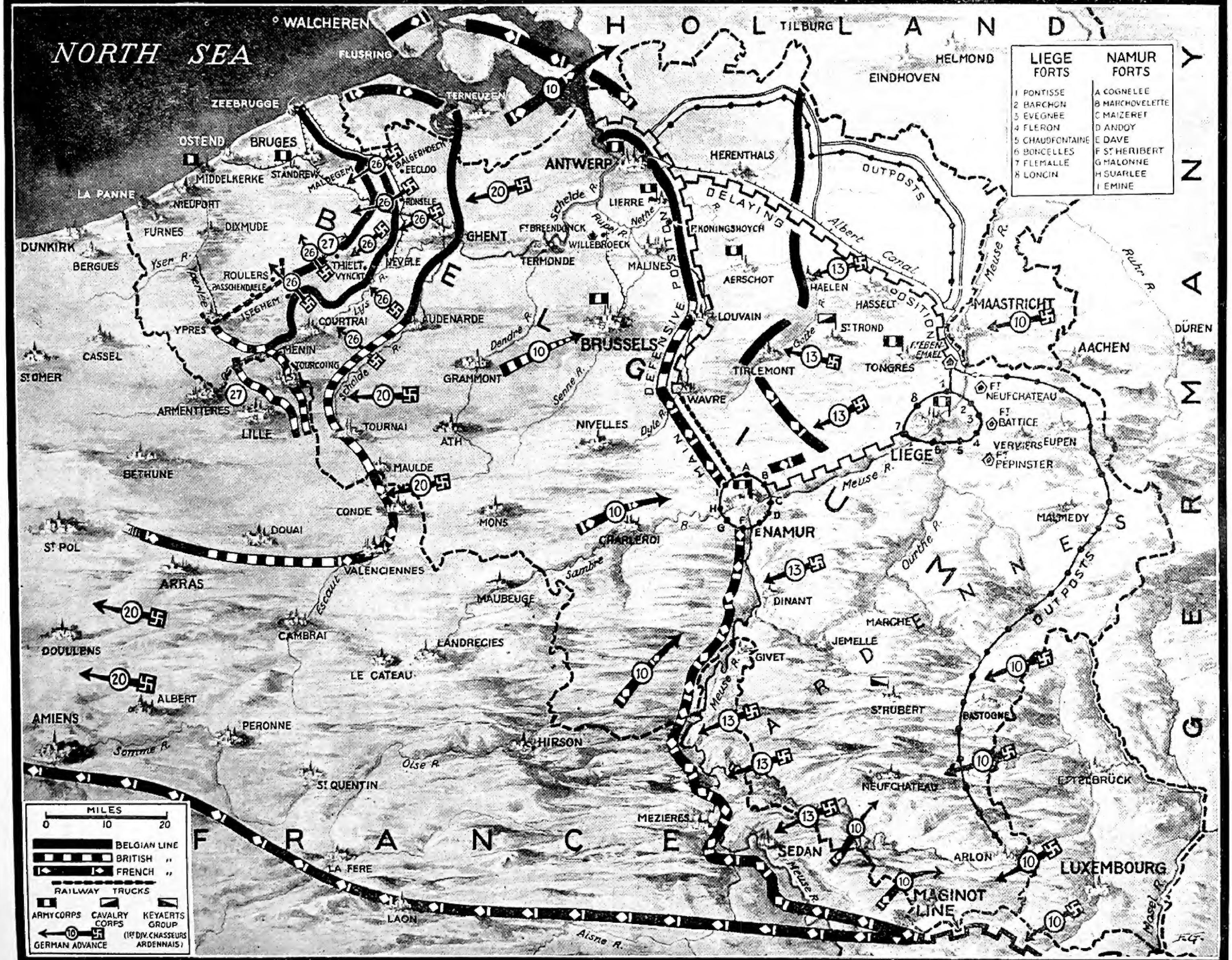
GENERAL ANDRÉ CORAP

Commander of the French 9th Army, holding the sector Namur-Mézières. After the Army was routed on May 14 he was replaced by General Giraud, who was captured by the enemy on the 16th. **(See illus. p. 856.)**

Photo, E.N.A.

Epic Resistance at Liége

At Liége the resistance was even longer continued. On May 16 King Leopold sent a message to Modart, ordering him and his men to "resist to the last for your country"; and resist, indeed, they did. Chaudfontaine did not fall until May 17, Pontisse and Barchon until the 18th, Evegnée until the 19th, Neufchâteau until the 21st, and Pepinster (Commandant A. Devos) was still holding out on May 28, when the armistice put an end to the fighting. As at Namur, the forts had acted as strong-points and had held up the German advance for a period.



CAMPAIGN IN BELGIUM, 1940. Numbers in circles indicate dates in May. Maastricht area in dotted rectangle is shown enlarged in p. 1529. See also colour maps in pages 1538–39.

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*

Chapter 146

THE CAMPAIGN IN BELGIUM: (2) AFTER THE NAZI BREAK-THROUGH AT SEDAN

Continuing the account of the campaign begun in Chapter 145, this Chapter deals with the Allied retreat and the perilous situation that led, on May 27, 1940, to King Leopold, as supreme Commander of his country's forces, opening negotiations with the enemy and signing a protocol of capitulation.

By May 16 the Allies were in full retreat. The 7th French Army, after some confused and ineffective fighting in Zeeland, fell back in disorder on Antwerp. The Belgians withdrew in three stages: behind the Willebroeck Canal, behind the Dendre, and behind the Scheldt, and as they went back they were hotly engaged on the Nethe, the Rupel, the Willebroeck Canal, the Scheldt, Flanders Head, and on the Dendre.

While these desperate rearguard actions were being fought, across the frontier to the south the Germans were making great progress. By the evening of May 18 the Panzers were nearing Péronne, and when on May 20 King Leopold heard that Cambrai had fallen and that Abbeville was threatened, he informed the British Government of his anxiety concerning the possibility that the Allied front would be broken, with the result that the Belgian Army, with the B.E.F. and part of the French force, would be cut off from Weygand's armies to the south.

On May 21 the situation became even more menacing. The Germans entered Amiens, and the B.E.F. began to fall back from the line of the Scheldt to the Lys. By now, too, the Allied troops on Walcheren Island, on the other side of the Scheldt beyond Antwerp, had been compelled to capitulate, thus leaving the Belgian left flank exposed. That day there was an Allied conference at Ypres, when General Weygand's plan for a double counter-attack to close the gap between the Allies in Belgium and the main French armies on the Somme was discussed.

Menacing Situation

It was agreed to make the attempt, and the Belgian Army (although it had neither tanks nor aircraft) was ordered to withdraw from its comparatively strong line on the Scheldt to the Lys, so as to permit the B.E.F. to retire behind the defensive line it had occupied throughout the winter. This movement, carried out on May 23, involved an extension of the Belgian line, and King Leopold's Army held a front of nearly 60 miles. At this time the dispositions of the Belgian Army were, from north to south, the Cavalry Corps at Terneuzen, then the Fifth, Second, Sixth, Seventh and Fourth Army Corps. One reserve division guarded the coast; otherwise the First Corps in reserve consisted of only two incomplete divisions which had been already severely handled in action. Then at Bruges, behind the Belgian Cavalry Corps, was the French 60th Division, holding the Leopold Canal; while the 16th French Corps was ordered by King Leopold to hold the canal from Gravelines to St. Omer, so as to secure the Lys and ensure freedom of action for the Allies, who were now, following the failure to close the gap, withdrawing from the south. To complete the picture we must visualize the appalling congestion on the roads, caused by the hundreds of thousands of refugees, fleeing in panic before the enemy advance.

Increased enemy pressure compelled the Belgians to abandon Terneuzen and Ghent; the only ports available were Ostend and Nieuport, and the few railway lines still usable were taxed beyond capacity in the effort to move food, ammunition, oil and hospital trains. On May 24 the Germans forced a crossing over the Lys on both sides of Courtrai, on the front held by the Belgian 1st and 3rd Divisions. The 10th and 9th Divisions were flung into the battle to fill the gap, and a number of prisoners were taken in a vigorous counter-attack on the front of the 2nd Army Corps. Then, since Belgian resistance was still stubborn, the German Command ordered a mass air attack. Formations of over 50 bombers, accompanied by screens of fighters, bombed and machine-gunned the Belgian lines, batteries, transport columns and headquarters, blasting the way for the German infantry.

Already the Germans had four regular divisions engaged in the attack, and now a fresh division came into action from Menin to Ypres, so threatening to sever the Belgian communications with the British. The Belgian 2nd Cavalry Division and 6th Infantry Division were transferred from the left to the right flank and frustrated this attempt; in conjunction with the 10th Infantry



COMMANDER OF THE INVADING ARMY

General Walther von Reichenau (left), seen in conversation with a captured Belgian officer. In the Polish campaign he had commanded an army which made a rapid advance to Warsaw, and he is said to have been the first to cross the Vistula, at its head. In the Belgian attack he led the German 6th Army. Later Reichenau was made Field-marshal.

Photo, E.N.A.

Division they kept the enemy at bay on the Ypres-Roulers line.

The next day (May 25) the B.E.F. began to withdraw to Dunkirk. For the Belgian Army there was no way of retreat. Pamphlets, inviting the soldiers to lay down their arms, were broadcast by German airmen (*see* illus. in page 1536). At dawn on May 25 King Leopold told his ministers that he was unshakably determined to resist to the limit of his forces, and to share in the fate of his army, and this resolve was repeated in an Order of the Day.

Soldiers,

The great battle which we have been expecting has begun. It will be fierce. We will fight on with all our strength and with supreme energy.

It is being fought on the ground where in 1914 we victoriously held the invader.

Soldiers,

Belgium expects you to do honour to her Flag.

Officers, Soldiers,

Whatever may happen, I shall share your fate. I call on you all for firmness, discipline, and confidence. Our cause is just and pure.

Providence will help us.

Long Live Belgium!

LEOPOLD.

In the Field, May 25, 1940.

A message in similar terms was sent by the King to London, but the death in a motor accident of General Billotte (representative of the C.-in-C. in the north), and the break-down of communications with France prevented him from notifying Paris. That same day General Dill, who was on a visit to the front, was informed of the imminent possibility of a break-through west of Menin; at about six the same evening Colonel Davy, head of the British Military Mission, was informed that the Belgian Army was quite unable to extend its front any further.

During the night of May 25, and in the course of the next day, 2,000 railway wagons were brought up and placed end to end on the railway line from Roulers to Ypres, thus forming an anti-tank line in front of Passchendaele of evil memory.

On May 26 the Germans thrust fiercely at the Belgian front at Iseghem, Nevele and Ronsele. At Nevele and Vynckt the 1st Division of Chasseurs Ardennais restored the position, but then the Germans forced a crossing over the canal at Balgerhoeck. So many were the thrusts, and with such a preponderance of force were they delivered, that they were more than the Belgians could withstand. All their reserves had been assembled, the coast was being held by lines of communication troops; the units holding the Yser, in particular, were exhausted. At midday on May 26 the Belgian Command handed the head of the French Mission a note which read:

The Belgian Command asks you to inform the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies that the Belgian Army is in a serious situation, and that the

TANK TRAPS AND BARRIERS WERE INEFFECTIVE

A German armoured column winding through a tank barrier in Belgium. Much reliance had been placed on such obstacles, but the Nazi Stukas went on ahead and paralysed all resistance by accurate dive-bombing, after which the Panzer columns pushed through.

Photo, E.N.A.







WHEN THE ANTWERP-NAMUR LINE WAS TURNED

The collapse of the French Ninth Army on May 14, 1940, and the German break-through at Sedan led to the abandonment by Belgian troops of the strong Antwerp-Namur line. Top, German tanks marshalled for the attack on Dinant; below, the effect of incendiary bombs dropped during a raid on Namur.

Photos, E.N.A.; Associated Press

Commander-in-Chief intends to carry on the fight as long as his resources permit. The enemy is at present attacking from Eecloo to Menin; the Army has nearly reached the limits of its endurance.

No reply to this message was received from the C.-in-C., but at 6 p.m. General Blanchard, General Billotte's successor, arrived at King Leopold's headquarters. He brought with him the news that the British were evacuating the frontier position on the right of the Belgian line and were withdrawing behind Ypres and Lille. On the same day the Belgian Command handed to the head of the Belgian Mission with British G.H.Q. the following note:

> Today, May 26, a very violent attack was launched against the Belgian Army on the Menin-Nevele front, and at the present moment fighting is continuing throughout the whole of the Eecloo region. In the absence of Belgian reserves we cannot extend the boundary notified yesterday any farther to the right. We are compelled regretfully to say that we have no longer any forces available to bar the way from Ypres. Furthermore, to retreat to the Yser is impossible, since it would, without loss to the enemy, destroy our fighting units even more rapidly than if we stand and fight. Flooding of the Yser-Yperlée region has not yet been begun. The ditches of the drainage-works on the eastern bank have been filled. All the preparatory work for flooding has been completed. The order to flood the eastern bank of the Yser, and the Yperlée, was given at nine o'clock on May 26. It should be noted that flooding will be fairly slow, as this is the season of low tides. Until further instructions there will be no flooding to the north of the Passchendaele Canal.

The situation was now desperate. The Belgian Command, now established at Middelkerke, suggested that the British should counter-attack between the Lys and the Scheldt on the flank and rear of the enemy, but the reply was made that the B.E.F. was in no fit state to undertake this operation. No assistance was forthcoming from the French. This was the situation when May 27 dawned.

Last Reserves Flung In

The last Belgian reserves, three weak regiments, were flung in. Somehow or other contact was maintained with the British. Generally speaking, the Belgian line continued to hold, but in the face of repeated enemy assaults, supported by an overwhelmingly large air force, it was forced back. The gunners fired point-blank, and when their ammunition limbers were empty blew up their guns so that they should not fall into the hands of the enemy. But heroism was not enough. Then at about 11 a.m. large gaps began to show in the front north of Maldegem, in the centre near Ursel, and on the right near Roulers and Thielt. Through these gaps the enemy filtered steadily. Near Thielt four or five miles of the front were left undefended, and the way was

SIDELIGHTS ON THE CONQUEST OF BELGIUM

Top, German advance detachment crossing a bridge damaged but not destroyed by the defenders ; left, centre, enemy units about to search a villa near the coast ; below, right, pioneers on light motor trucks patrol a railway ; bottom photograph, an anti-tank gun on the edge of a bomb crater in a war-scarred Belgian village.

Photos, E.N.A. ; Keystone



BRUSSELS WAS SPARED THE HORRORS OF BOMBARDMENT

The rapid advance of the German forces and the piercing of the main Belgian lines of defence soon made Brussels untenable : on May 17, after only eight days, the Nazis were able to enter the capital, and here a German cyclist corps is seen passing through the city.

Photo, E.N.A.

open to Bruges. At about 12.30 King Leopold telegraphed to General Gort :

"The Belgian Army is losing heart. It has been fighting without a break for the past four days under a heavy bombardment, which the R.A.F. has been unable to prevent. Having heard that the Allied group is surrounded and aware of the great superiority of the enemy, the troops have concluded that the situation is desperate. The time is rapidly approaching when they will be unable to continue the fight. The King will be forced to capitulate to avoid a collapse." Two hours later the French liaison authorities were told that "Belgian resistance is at its last extremity ; our front is about to break like a worn bowstring."

The end was indeed at hand. Belgian losses had been shockingly heavy. The field hospitals were crammed to overflowing. Many of the guns were without ammunition. No longer could the Army offer organized resistance. In front pressed on the vast hosts of the enemy; behind, the fields and towns that separated the fighting zone from the sea were packed with a mob of terrified refugees. More than three million people, it is estimated, were crowded into an area of less than 650 square miles. Food was beginning to run short.

Three Million Refugees

Shortly before 4 p.m. the Belgian Command had come to certain definite conclusions. The first was that the Belgian Army had carried out its task, since it had resisted to the very limit of its capacity—until, indeed, it could fight no longer. There could be no retreat to the Yser, since that would be more destructive than the actual fighting now in progress, and would, moreover, increase the congestion in the Allied zone. Then it was thought that the dispatch of an envoy to ask the Germans for a cessation of hostilities would give the Allies the night of May 27 and part of the morning of May 28, thus providing an interval which, if fighting were continued, could be given only at the cost of the complete destruction of the Belgian Army. There was, it should be noted, no question of embarkation ; even if this had been possible, it would have left uncovered the retreat of the British and French forces at Dunkirk.

So at 5 p.m. King Leopold sent Maj.-Gen. Derousseaux, Deputy Chief of the General Staff, as his envoy to the German Command to ask for an armistice, to come into force at midnight ; at the same moment the King informed the British and French authorities of this step. The message was promptly received in London and Paris, but all communications with Lord Gort's Army had been cut.

At 10 p.m. Derousseaux returned from the H.Q. of the German 18th Army, bearing the reply that : "The Fuehrer demands that arms be laid down unconditionally." At 11 p.m. King Leopold, in full agreement with his Chief of Staff, bowed to the inevitable ; he decided to accept the terms and proposed that the "Cease Fire" should be sounded at 4 a.m. At that hour on May 28 firing ceased along the whole of the Belgian front, except for the Roulers-Ypres sector, where the Belgian units had not been informed of the capitulation and so continued their resistance for some two hours more.

At about 9 a.m. a message was received from the German Command demanding free passage for its columns towards the sea. At once the message was telephoned to the head of the French

BELGIAN ROADS WERE BLOCKED BY COUNTLESS REFUGEES

With doleful memories of a former invasion, Belgian civilians poured in thousands on to the roads leading to France. Later, as the defending army retreated, this movement became a frenzied flight and the highways for miles were made virtually impassable to military traffic.

Photo, Associated Press

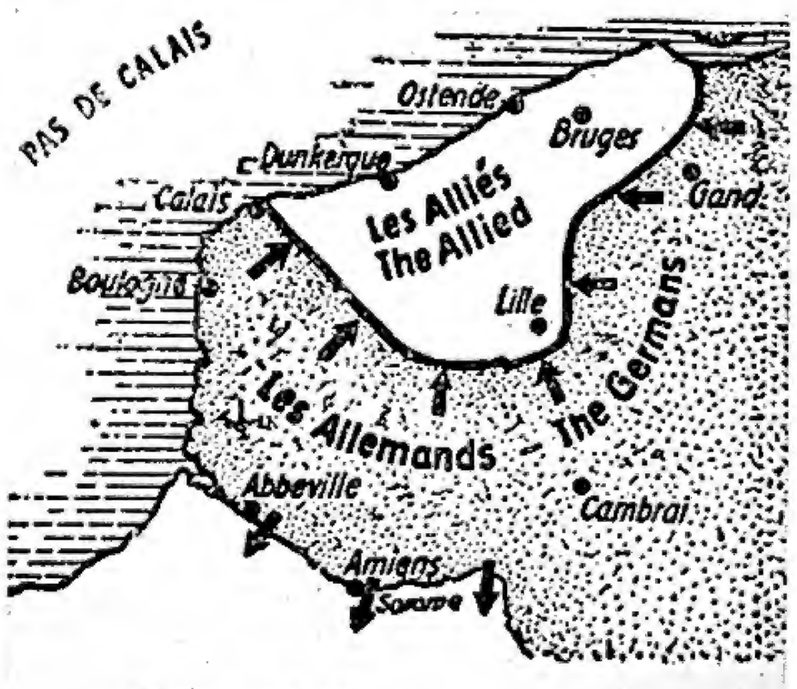




POIGNANT EPISODE OF THE LAST PHASE IN BELGIUM

This vivid photograph shows Belgian infantry running for cover when heavily bombed from the air on May 27, 1940, the day before hostilities ceased on the signing of the capitulation protocol by King Leopold at Belgian Headquarters. At 4 a.m. on May 28 an armistice came into effect.

Photo, E.N.A.



Camarades!

Telle est la situation!
En tout cas, la guerre est finie pour vous!
Vos chefs vont s'enfuir par avion.
A bas les armes!

British Soldiers!

Look at this map: it gives your true situation!
Your troops are entirely surrounded —
stop fighting!
Put down your arms!

NAZI PROPAGANDA LEAFLET

Dropped in the Belgian lines, this sheet in French and English urges the defenders to cease resistance to the invaders.

From "Belgium: the Official Account of What Happened, 1939-40." (Published for the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Evans Bros., Ltd.)

Mission. Shortly afterwards communications between the representatives of the Allied Command and the Belgian were finally severed by a breakdown of the telephone system. The Protocol signed that day by General von Reichenau for the German Army and General Derousseaux for the Belgian contained the following provisions:

The Belgian Army shall unconditionally lay down its arms at once and shall from that time onwards regard itself as prisoner of war. An armistice was entered into this morning at 5 a.m. [German Summer time] at the request of the Belgian Command. The German operations against the British and French troops will not be suspended.

Belgian territory will at once be occupied, including all the ports. No further damage shall be done to the locks or coastal fortifications.

As a mark of honourable surrender, the Officers of the Belgian Army shall retain their weapons.

The Château of Laeken shall be placed at the disposal of His Majesty the King in order that he may reside there with his family, his military attendants, and his servants.

One final proclamation was made by King Leopold before leaving his Army.

G.H.Q., May 28, 1940.

Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Men,

Plunged unexpectedly into a war of unparalleled violence, you have fought courageously to defend your homeland step by step.

Exhausted by an uninterrupted struggle against an enemy very much superior in numbers and in material, we have been forced to surrender.

History will relate that the Army did its duty to the full. Our Honour is safe.

This violent fighting, these sleepless nights, cannot have been in vain. I enjoin you not to be disheartened, but to bear yourselves with dignity. Let your attitude and your discipline continue to win you the esteem of the foreigner.

I shall not leave you in our misfortune, and I shall watch over your future and that of your families.

Tomorrow we will set to work with the firm intention of raising our country from its ruins.

LEOPOLD

Belgium's part in the campaign was over. Her towns were devastated, her economic and social life disrupted. Her Army was now being disarmed. Her King, having striven to be worthy of his great father, passed into honourable captivity, a prisoner at Laeken.



















THE WOMEN'S WAR SERVICES

Typical members of some of the chief Services are here shown in their distinctive dress. 1, Air Transport Auxiliary Service (ferrying light planes from factory to aerodrome) ; 2, Signaller of the Women's Royal Naval Service ; 3, Lance-Corporal of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (inset, A.T.S. field service cap) ; 4, London Transport Bus Conductors ; 5, Despatch Riders of Mechanized Transport Corps ; 6, Airwoman of Women's Auxiliary Air Service (handing weather report to Pilot) ; 7, Girl of the Women's Land Army ; 8, Driver, Auxiliary Fire Service (inset, A.F.S. forage cap) ; 9, Postwoman. (See also coloured plate of Badges, page 1540.)

MAP 2.

RETREAT TO FRONTIER DEFENCES AND THE CANAL LINE

MAY 16TH, 18TH & 23RD

60 DIV.
68 DIV.(FR.)
60 DIV.(FR.)
68 DIV.
ANTWERP
Ostend
Bruges
B
La Panne
Nieuport
Furnes
Dunkirk
Gravelines
Calais
Bergues
Roulers
Ghent
E
Dendre
Malines
Dyle
Lys
Escaut
Alost
3 DIV
Louvain
4 DIV.
1 DIV.
2 DIV
5 DIV.
BRUSSELS
60 DIV.
44 DIV.
18 DIV.
Poperinghe
Ypres
Courtrai
Halluin
EVACUATED NIGHT 23/24
Boulogne
St Omer
DET. 23 DIV.
Hazebrouck
Bailleul
4 DIV.
Tourcoing
Roubaix
48 DIV
Wavre
Dyle
Liege
Armentières
Aire
G.H.Q.
1 DIV.
LILLE
Maulde
Ath
Tournai
42 DIV.
Nivelles
1ST ARMY (FR.)
F
R
A
N
C
E
Lys
POL FORCE
2 DIV.
23 DIV.
46 DIV.
Etaples
Canche
Béthune
La Bassée
Lens
Namur
Meuse
Mons
Charleroi
St Pol
Douai
MACFORCE
1ST ARMY (FR.)
Valenciennes
Sambre
FRANK FORCE
Arras
Maubeuge
Dinant
Authie
Doullens
Abbeville
Le Tréport
12 DIV.
Cambrai
REMAINS 9TH ARMY (FR.)
Meuse
Fumay
PETRE FORCE
23 DIV.
Albert
1 BDE 12 DIV.
Somme
Amiens
Péronne
St Quentin
Oise
Somme
3RD ARMY (FR.)
Mezières
Sedan
10TH ARMY (FR.)
1 ARMD DIV.
Laon
Oise
Aisne
Meuse
Reims

POSITIONS	16TH MAY	18TH MAY	23RD MAY
BRITISH	○○○○	●●●●	
FRENCH			
BELGIAN			
GERMAN "PANZER" FORCES		⇦	⇦

10 5 0 10 20 30 MILES

STANFORD, LONDON

1538

MAP 1.

THE ADVANCE OF B.E.F.

SITUATION 10TH – 16TH MAY

10 5 0 10 20 30 MILES

Ostend · Bruges · Nieuport · La Panne · Furnes · Dunkirk · Gravelines · Calais · Bergues · Roulers · Poperinghe · Ypres · Courtrai · Ghent · Malines · Antwerp · Aalst · Louvain · Brussels · Wavre · Liège · Namur · Meuse · Charleroi · Mons · Valenciennes · Maubeuge · Cambrai · Douai · Lens · Arras · Béthune · Lys · Aire · St Omer · Hazebrouck · Bailleul · Armentières · Lille · Tourcoing · Roubaix · Tournai · Ath · Nivelles · Etaples · Boulogne · Canche · Authie · Abbeville · Doullens · Le Tréport · Dieppe · Bresle · Somme · Amiens · Albert · Péronne · St Quentin · Oise · Furnay · Meuse · Mézières · Sedan

B E L G I U M

F R A N C E

GERMANY

80 D(F) · 68 D(F) · XV C(FR)

7TH ARMY (FR.) · 1ST ARMY (FR.) · 9TH ARMY (FR.)

ORIGINAL G.H.Q. · ADVR G.H.Q. · G.H.Q. BATTLE POST

I 2 DIV. · II 5 DIV. · III 50 DIV. · I 48 D. · II 3 DIV. · 4 DIV. · 1 DIV. · 2 DIV. · III 44 DIV. · 42 D. · 3 DIV. · 1 DIV. · 50 DIV. · 48 DIV. · 42 D.

DEFENCE LINE 1ST ARMY (FR.) · 13TH ARMY

REMAINS 9TH ARMY (FRENCH)

POSITION 10TH MAY 16TH MAY
BRITISH
FRENCH
BELGIAN
GERMAN

5 DIV

51ST DIV. on the Saar May 10TH

STANFORD, LONDON

ADVANCE AND RETREAT OF THE B.E.F.

Illustrating Chapters 147 and 148

THESE three maps illustrate approximately the advance of the British Expeditionary Force into Belgium from the positions it occupied on May 10, and the main stages of its retreat leading up to the Evacuation at Dunkirk.

Map 1 (above) shows the advance and the position taken up by the Allies on the Dyle line.

Map 2 (opposite page) shows successive stages of the retreat and the dispositions made to meet the enemy's enveloping attack prior to the decision to retire to Dunkirk. It illustrates the trap in which the Northern Armies were caught and the "corridor" which the German "break-through" over the Meuse had established across France. It makes it clear why, unless the corridor were bridged by counter-attacks delivered from north and south, escape from the trap was impracticable. It also shows how the Northern Armies, attacked from three sides, found it impossible to concentrate sufficient force to carry out an effective attack southwards.

Map 3 (right) gives the final positions from which the withdrawal into the Dunkirk bridgehead began and the dispositions on the bridgehead perimeter taken up to cover the Evacuation.

It has of course been impossible to indicate the movements of individual units or show where the principal collision with the enemy took place, but by following the movements of Divisions it should be possible in most cases to trace approximately the movements of units whose Divisions are known to readers. In confused operations units and minor bodies of troops may be given a special mission which leads to their becoming separated from formations to which they normally belong. *See also* maps in pages 1546, 1550, and 1555.

Based upon official War Office maps issued for the Despatches of Gen. Lord Gort by permission of the Controller, H.M. Stationery Office

MAP 3

FINAL RETREAT

28TH TO 30TH

POSITION 28TH MAY 30TH MAY
BRITISH
BEACHES
FRENCH
BEACHES

EMBARKING

H.Q. 3 CORPS · 2 DIV. · 23 DIV. · 44 DIV. · 46 DIV.

Ostend · Nieuport · La Panne · Dunkirk · Furnes · Gravelines · Bergues · Bourbourg · Dixmude · Ypres · Cassel · Bavinchove · St Omer · Hazebrouck · Bailleul · Armentières · Lille · Wervicq · Comines · Lumbres · Blaringhem · Aire · Thiennes · Merville · Lillers · Béthune · La Bassée · Audruicq · Zeggers Cappel · Steenvoorde · Wormhoudt · Wytschaete · Messines · Ravelsberg · Kemmel · Poperinghe · Oostvleteren · Zuydcoote · Leffrinckoucke · Ghyvelde · Bray-Dunes · Mardyck · Spycker · Canal de Bourbourg · Canal de la Haute Colme · Canal de la Basse Colme · Canal d'Aire à la Bassée · River Lys

I C. · II C. · III C. · 20 TANKS FRENCH

1 DIV. · 2 DIV. · 3 DIV. · 4 DIV. · 5 DIV. · 12 DIV. · 18 DIV. · 32 DIV. · 42 DIV. · 44 DIV. · 46 DIV. · 48 DIV. · 50 DIV. · 60 DIV. · 68 DIV. · 80 DIV. · 1 DIV. (FR.)

1ST ARMY (FR.)

FRENCH RETREATING

1 0 1 2 3 4 5 10 MILES

STANFORD, LONDON

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE

MECHANISED TRANSPORT TRAINING CORPS

ENTERTAINMENTS NATIONAL SERVICE ASSOCIATION

FIRST AID NURSING YEOMANRY

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AIR FORCE

NAVY, ARMY, & AIR FORCE INSTITUTES

ROYAL NAVAL PATROL SERVICE

WAR ORGANISATION OF BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY & ORDER OF ST JOHN

WOMEN'S LAND ARMY

AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS

METROPOLITAN SPECIAL CONSTABULARY

CIVIL NURSING RESERVE

AUXILIARY FIRE SERVICE

VOLUNTARY WORKERS FOR THE FORCES

METROPOLITAN POLICE WAR RESERVE

NATIONAL AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS ANIMALS COMMITTEE

THE FRENCH OF GREAT BRITAIN

MERCHANT NAVY

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES

WOMEN'S ROYAL NAVAL SERVICE (P.O. Badge)

BADGES OF AUXILIARY WAR SERVICES

Most of these badges need no description. The Mechanized Transport Training Corps was a voluntary organization of women transport drivers, etc. The R.N. Patrol Service had a minesweeping and an anti-submarine branch: the shark with its death-wound represents a U-boat. The A.R.P. badge gave place to one with the initials C.D. (Civil Defence), and when the Fire Service was nationalized its badge bore the letters N.F.S. Later, too, a shoulder flash superseded the Home Guard armlet.

Chapter 147

LORD GORT'S DESPATCHES: (1) ORGANIZATION AND MARSHALLING OF THE B.E.F.

In this, the first of two Chapters dealing with the Commander-in-Chief's Despatches, Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn comments on the first Despatch, covering the transport of the B.E.F. to France and its marshalling in the sector of defence allotted to it by the Allied Command. He also deals with the first section of the second Despatch which covers the period up to the opening of the German offensive on May 10, 1940

LORD GORT'S despatches were published on October 17, 1941, as a supplement to the London Gazette of October 10. They could hardly have been published much earlier with safety because, though the campaign in France had long since closed, the despatches reveal deficiencies in the equipment of the Expeditionary Force and therefore, by implication, the backward condition of Britain's war industries. They would have given information of great value to the enemy pending a fundamental change in our state of preparedness.

There are two despatches. The first, dated April 25, 1940, deals with the movement of the Expeditionary Force to France, its deployment and development up to January 31, 1940. The second despatch, dated July 25, 1940, is in two sections: the first section completes the record of the development of the Expeditionary Force up to the outbreak of active operations and discusses the plans made for an advance into Belgium; the second describes the active operations up to May 31, when Lord Gort returned to England. There is an appendix giving the story of the last two days of the Dunkirk evacuation. As part of the G.H.Q. records were destroyed by enemy action, other records from various sources have been drawn on in the compilation of the narrative section.

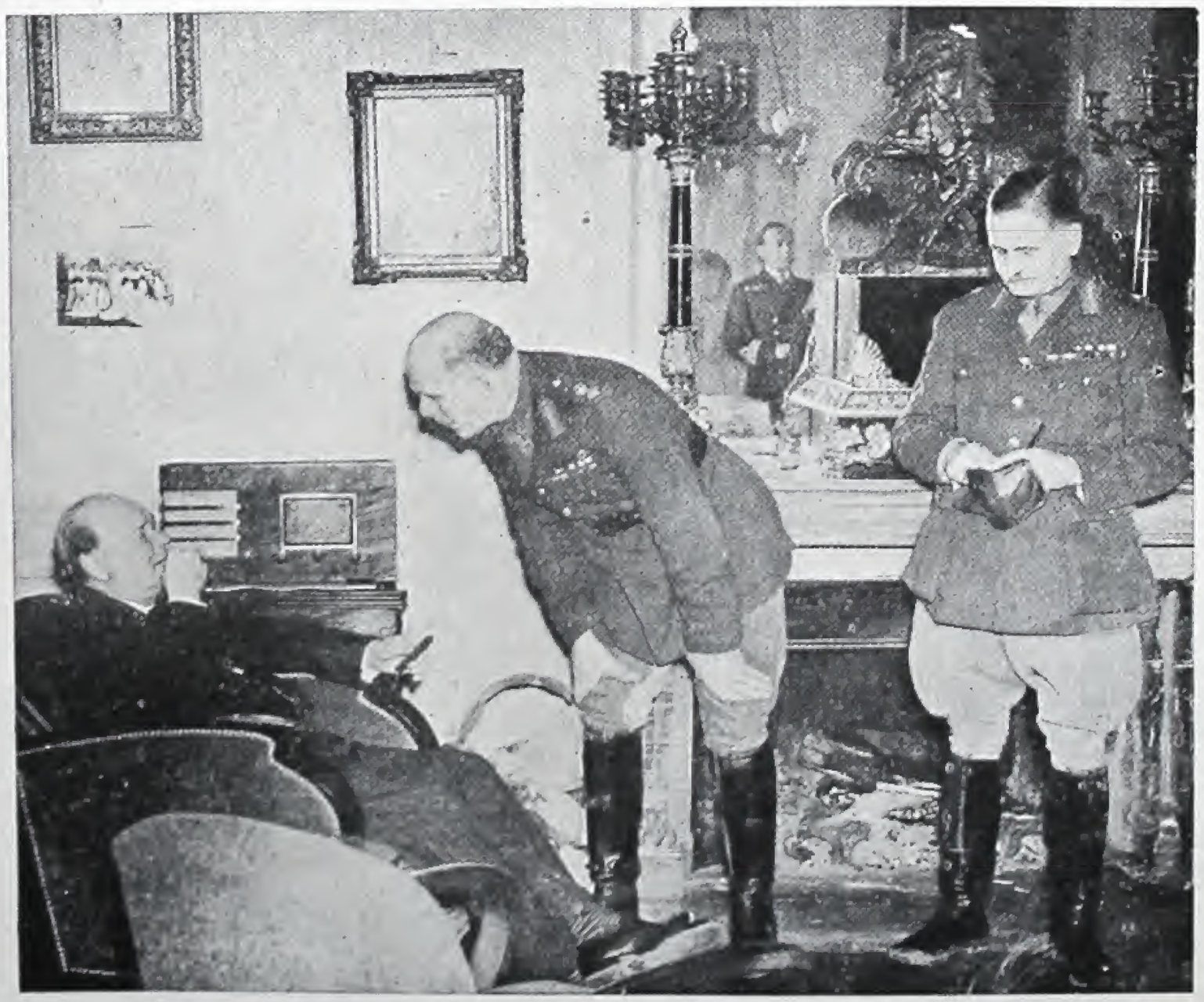
In this Chapter comments will be confined to the first despatch and the first section of the second despatch, leaving the operations to be dealt with in a subsequent Chapter. Although it may not make so wide an appeal as the record of active operations, the history of the preceding phase is of special value, for it throws much light on aspects of the problem of sending an army overseas which are unfamiliar even to many interested in military matters.

Possibly the synchronization of the release of the despatches with a popular demand that an Expeditionary Force should be sent to open a new front in Western Europe was not entirely fortuitous.

It is especially interesting to study the moves of the first contingent of the B.E.F. from England to their place in the front line, for it may be assumed that the operation was carried out with as little delay as possible. (It could hardly have been anticipated that months of what Americans called a "phoney war" would ensue.) Yet this small force (consisting of only four infantry divisions and a proportion of army units), which started to move on September 10, was not in position till October 12, although conditions were astonishingly favourable. There was no interference by the enemy. Good and undamaged ports were available for embarkation and disembarkation; rail service both in England and France was in full operation, and at the time shipping resources had not yet had to meet full wartime demands. The movement in execution had therefore much of the character of peacetime manoeuvres, and the principal adverse circumstance was that the sea passage, in order to avoid the danger of air attack, was longer than in 1914.

The movement was carried through without casualty, thanks partly to the waiting policy adopted by both sides in air warfare, but more especially to the ward and protection of the Navy — for there were no "phoney" conditions at sea. The great distance of ports of disembarkation from the final position of the troops accounted for some delay, but it was negligible compared with

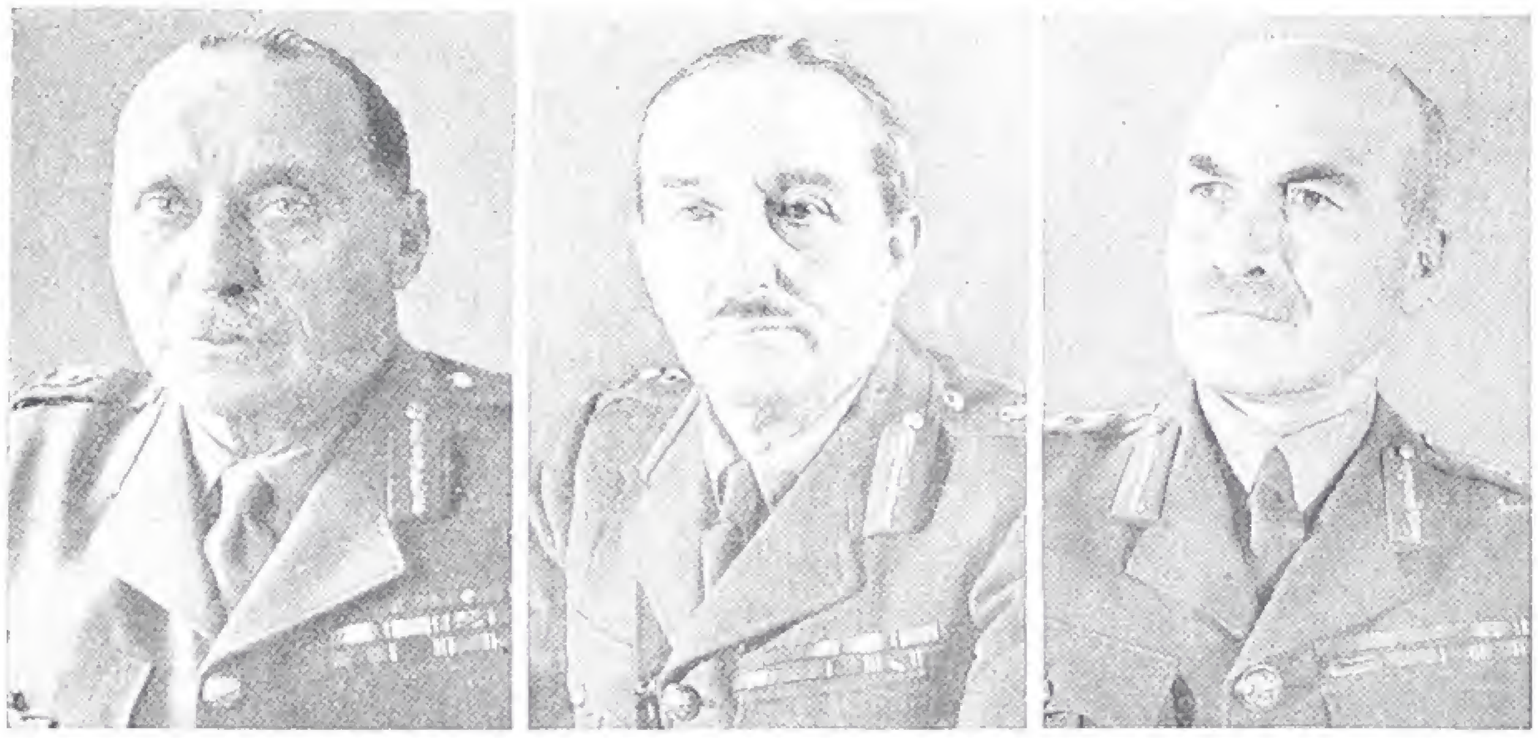
Navy Guarded B.E.F.



WHEN THE PREMIER VISITED GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

Taken early in November, 1939, this photograph shows Mr. Churchill in conversation with Lord Gort. On the right is Lieut.-General Sir H. R. Pownall, who was Chief of General Staff with the British Expeditionary Force. Two months later Mr. Churchill again visited G.H.Q. in France.

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CORPS COMMANDERS OF THE BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

Left : Lieut.-General M. G. H. Barker, C.B., D.S.O., who took over command of the I Corps from Sir John Dill when the latter became Deputy C.I.G.S. ; centre : Lieut.-General A. F. (later General Sir Alan Francis) Brooke, K.C.B., D.S.O. (II Corps) ; right : Lieut.-General Sir Ronald Forbes Adam, Bt., K.C.B., D.S.O. (III Corps).

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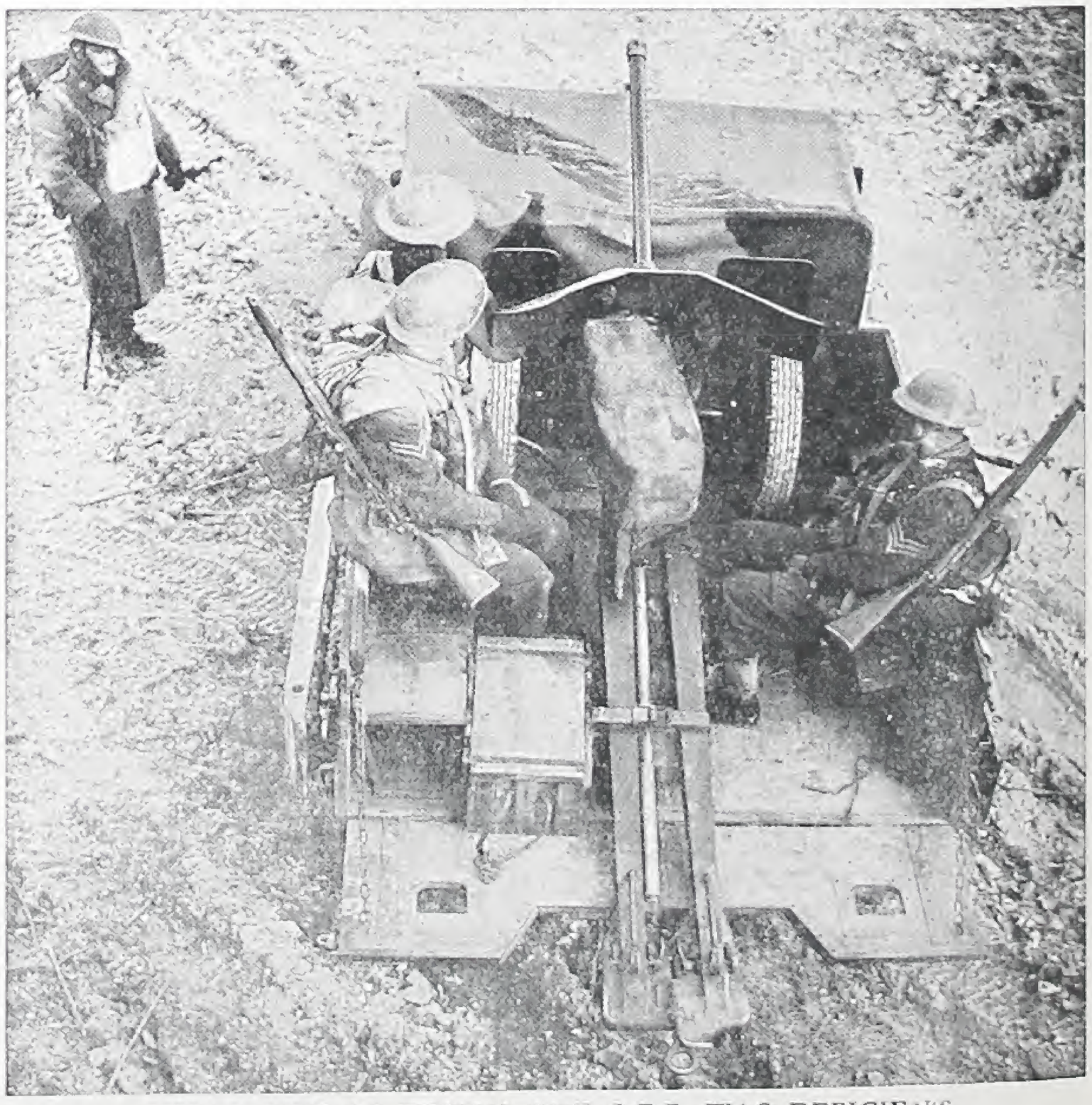
delays and difficulties which would have occurred if the movement had been subjected to air attack. The point to be emphasized, however, is this—if the landing of a small force in a friendly country with all resources available is slow and complicated, how infinitely more difficult would be the landing and deployment of a large force in face of strong opposition by land and air.

Disembarking in a friendly country, it is possible to load ships in the most convenient way, to use selected ports for the discharge of cargoes for which they are best equipped, and to avoid congestion by the use of a number of such ports. In the case of the Expeditionary Force, troops were landed at Cherbourg, while stores and vehicles went to Nantes, St. Nazaire and Brest in the first instance. Later the number of ports in use rose to seventeen. Only in the assembly areas at Le Mans and Laval did the troops, their heavier weapons and their transport reunite. That convenient arrangement could not have been adopted if enemy opposition had been likely, for in that case every ship would have had to be stowed so that troops on landing would have their full equipment with them, and so that everything should come off the ships in the order in which it would be needed. The difficulty of ensuring that in such circumstances petrol and ammunition supplies should be at once available in sufficient quantities hardly needs emphasizing. Conditions have indeed changed since the days when troops could land from boats and fight it out on the beach with musket and bayonet. Even if surprise is still possible, the enemy with motor vehicles and aircraft can now bring up reinforcements much more rapidly than a mechanized army can disembark.

Where B.E.F. Landed

Until Gort's despatches were published the location of the Expeditionary Force and its composition at the time active operations began had not been disclosed. It may be well therefore to give them here in summarized form. The line Lord Gort agreed to occupy, at the request of General Georges, Commander of the French Front of the North-East, ran along the Belgian frontier from Maulde (exclusive), where the Escaut river crosses the frontier, to Halluin (inclusive). This sector, facing north-east, was evidently selected with a view to a possible advance into Belgium. In addition, the B.E.F. was responsible for a defensive flank following the Lys from Halluin to Armentières—subsequently extended to Bailleul. The British front, therefore, ran round a salient at the base of which was Lille, with Halluin at the apex.

The stages by which the B.E.F. went to its station in France are given in detail in the despatches, but it will suffice to note a few of the more important dates and the final composition of the Army prior to its advance into Belgium. Embarkation of the first four divisions commenced on September 10,



VITAL ARM IN WHICH THE B.E.F. WAS DEFICIENT

An anti-tank gun mounted in a lorry for a practice shoot during the long lull before the German offensive. Lord Gort has stated that no guns were available for protecting Corps or rearward areas against tank attack ; yet our equipment was more ample than that of the French.

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Lieut.-Gen. Hon. H. R. L. G. Alexander, C.B., C.S.I., D.S.O., Commander, 1st Division, and, later, I Corps.



Maj.-Gen. (later Lt.-Gen.) H. C. Lloyd, C.B., D.S.O., Commander, 2nd Division, 1939–1940.



Maj.-Gen. (later Lt.-Gen.) B. L. Montgomery, C.B., D.S.O., Commander, 3rd Division, 1939–1940.



Maj.-Gen. (later Lt.-Gen.) D. G. Johnson, V.C., C.B., D.S.O., Commander, 4th Division, 1938–1940.



Maj.-Gen. (later Lt.-Gen.) H. E. Franklyn, C.B., D.S.O., Commanded 5th Division, and, later, 'Frankforce.'



Maj.-Gen. (later Lt.-Gen.) W. G. Holmes, C.B., D.S.O., Commanded 42nd Division.

B.E.F. DIVISIONAL COMMANDERS

Here are portraits of leaders of the British Expeditionary Force. To General Alexander Lord Gort handed over command when he sailed for England on June 1, 1940. General Franklyn had commanded all British troops in and around Arras ('Frankforce'). General Martel later commanded the Royal Armoured Corps in Britain. General Fortune was captured, along with many of his Highlanders, on June 12 at St. Valery-en-Caux.

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Maj.-Gen. (later Lt.-Gen.) E. A. Osborne, C.B., D.S.O., Commanded 44th Division, 1938–1940.



Maj.-Gen. (later Lt.-Gen.) A. F. A. N. Thorne, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Commanded 48th Division.



Maj.-Gen. G. Le Quesne Martel, C.B., D.S.O., Commander, 50th (Motorized) Division.



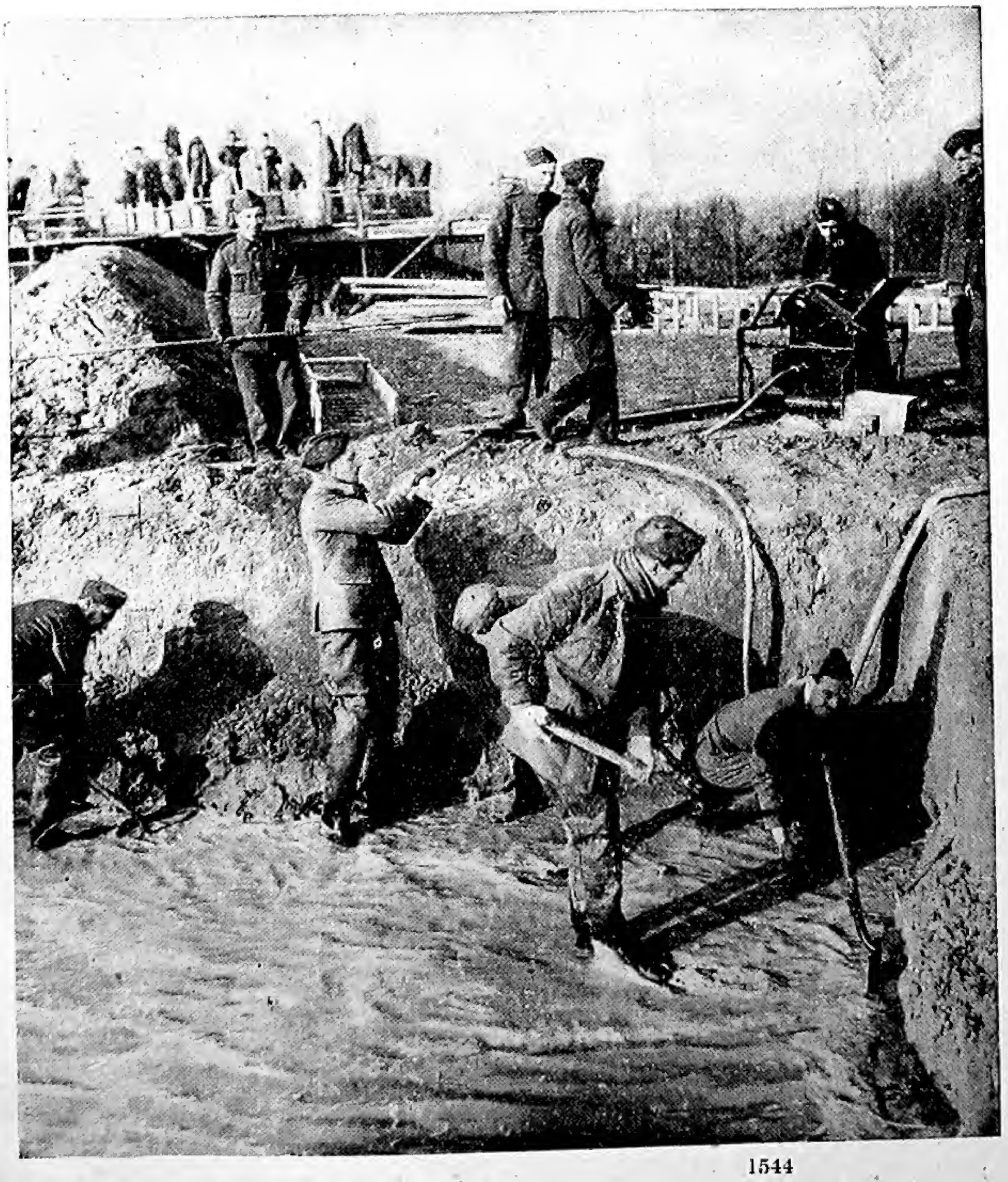
Maj.-Gen. V. M. Fortune, C.B., D.S.O., Commanded 51st (Highland) Division.



BEFORE THE STORM BROKE IN FRANCE

Top, on the outskirts of a French town men of the B.E.F. are seen with two anti-aircraft guns ; some of the crew, off duty for the moment, lend a hand to load a farm wagon. Below, a party digging trenchworks : water is being removed with a petrol-driven pump.

Photos, British Official Crown Copyright



and they were in position by October 12 with their line of communications established. By the end of the year the fifth Regular Division had also assembled, and the five divisions were in line. Territorial Divisions began to arrive in January, 1940, the 48th being the first. It was followed in February by the 51st (Highland) and 50th (Motorized) Divisions. The 42nd and 44th had been due to arrive about the same time, but owing to possible developments in connexion with the Finnish War their embarkation was postponed, and not till the end of March was their movement to France completed. The Armoured Division was due to arrive in May, but for reasons which appear in Chapter 148 it never came under Lord Gort's orders.

When operations commenced the B.E.F. therefore consisted of the following ten divisions : 1st (Alexander) ; 2nd (Lloyd) ; 3rd (Montgomery) ; 4th (Johnson) ; 5th (Franklyn) ; 42nd (Holmes) ; 44th (Osborne) ; 48th (Thorne) ; 50th (Martel) ; 51st (Fortune). It was organized as three Army Corps and one motorized division : 1st Corps (Barker, in succession to Dill, appointed Deputy C.I.G.S.) ; 2nd Corps (Brooke) ; 3rd Corps (Adam). Army troops in addition to the motorized division included a tank brigade of two battalions, while each division included a mechanized cavalry regiment (light tanks). It should be noted that at the time of the advance into Belgium the 51st (Highland) Division was detached from Lord Gort's command.

Composition of the B.E.F.

In November, 1939, in order to give troops training in routine and tactics when in actual contact with the enemy, it had been arranged that infantry brigades should be sent in turn for a short period to the Saar front, where they took their place, under the orders of a French divisional commander, in the outpost position in front of the Maginot Line. In March, 1940, it was decided to extend the system and to send a whole division, including its cavalry regiment and other divisional troops, to take over a sector of the front in line. The 51st Division was thus sent, and owing to the subsequent developments remained under French command. Its experiences are not described in the despatches. [They are dealt with in Chapter 149.] The Saar arrangement was undoubtedly a good one, especially as it brought our troops in contact with the French and familiarized them with French methods. But the training lost some of its value owing to the prevailing quiescent conditions,

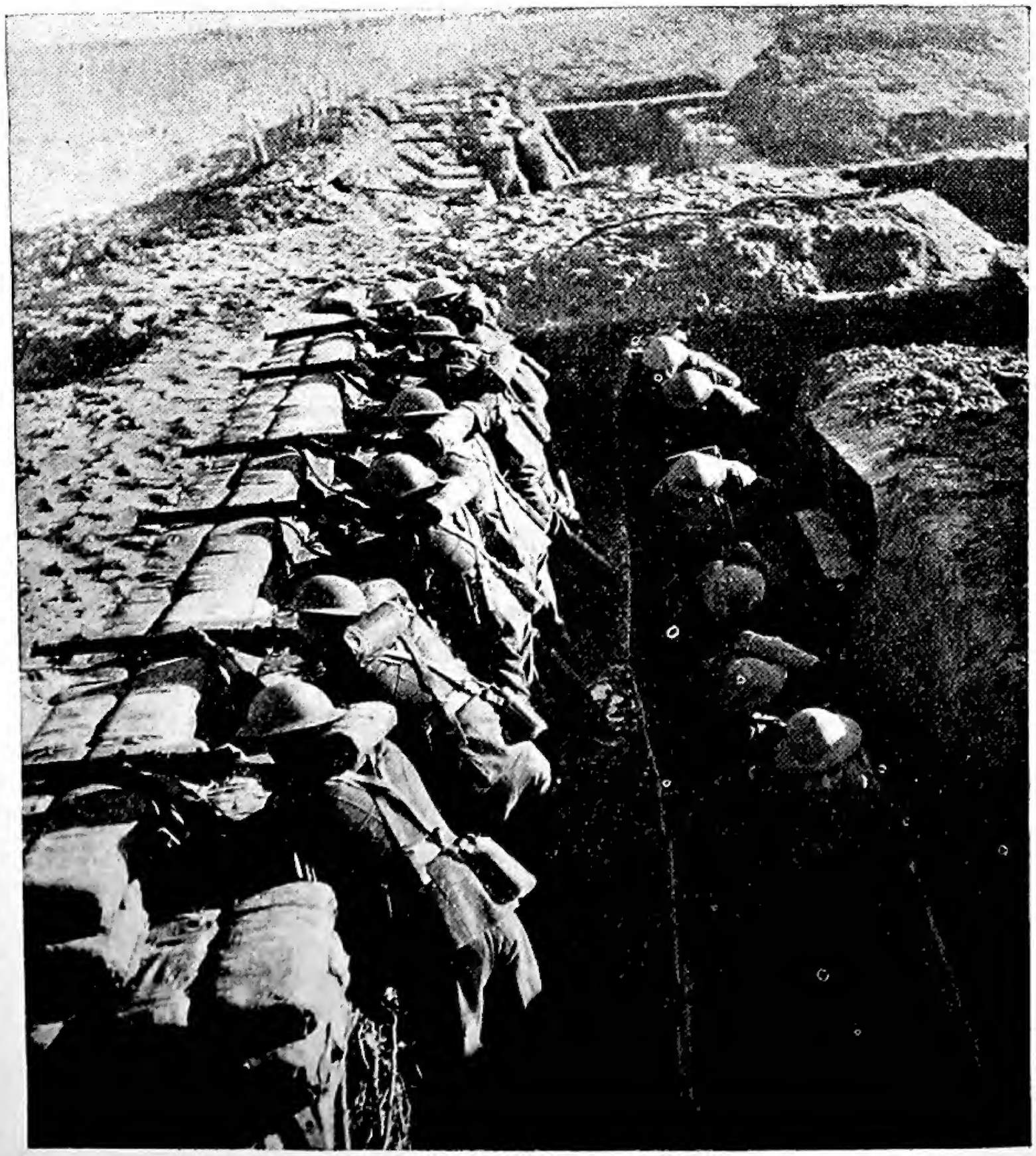
though the width of No-man's-land (some 1,500 yards) at this sector gave scope for patrolling activities.

On the British front troops were mainly engaged during the winter in improving the very sketchy defences they had taken over. An immense amount of digging and concrete work had to be done to provide a defensive system properly organized in depth. As much training as possible was carried out, particularly in anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons, but probably not as much as was desirable. In addition, there was much to be done on the line of communications, in improving and constructing aerodromes. Concrete runways were essential and some 50,000 tons of concrete were used, 10,000 men being employed in laying it, in levelling the airfields and preparing the surface. It is impossible to give any adequate idea of the variety and amount of work required on the line of communications in a foreign country. Base and intermediate depots have to be constructed and connected with the railway system. Hospitals, hutments and storesheds are only a few of the items that must be provided. Shortage of labour became acute, and to meet this difficulty three partly trained divisions were sent from England to undertake labour duties while completing their training. This, however, meant training at a much slower pace: the divisions sent were the 12th, 23rd and 46th, and as they were not intended to take part in operations their equipment was on a minimum scale. The history of these divisions is told in a later Chapter.

Such, then, in its main components was the force Lord Gort commanded, and such, broadly speaking, were the tasks given it during the months before the German offensive began. Was the Commander satisfied that it was a force properly constituted and equipped to meet in active operations the German Army, manned, armed and equipped as it was known to be, and manoeuvred as it had been during the Polish campaign? Although Gort makes few complaints, one can hardly think that he was satisfied. He mentions a shortage of ammunition reserves, lack of armour-piercing shells, shortage of anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons, and discloses that the Signal Service was inadequate to cope with the dispersion of Headquarters and units necessitated by precautions against air attack. Most important of all was the lack of a powerful armoured component. The light tanks of the cavalry regiments and the infantry tanks of the Tank Corps,

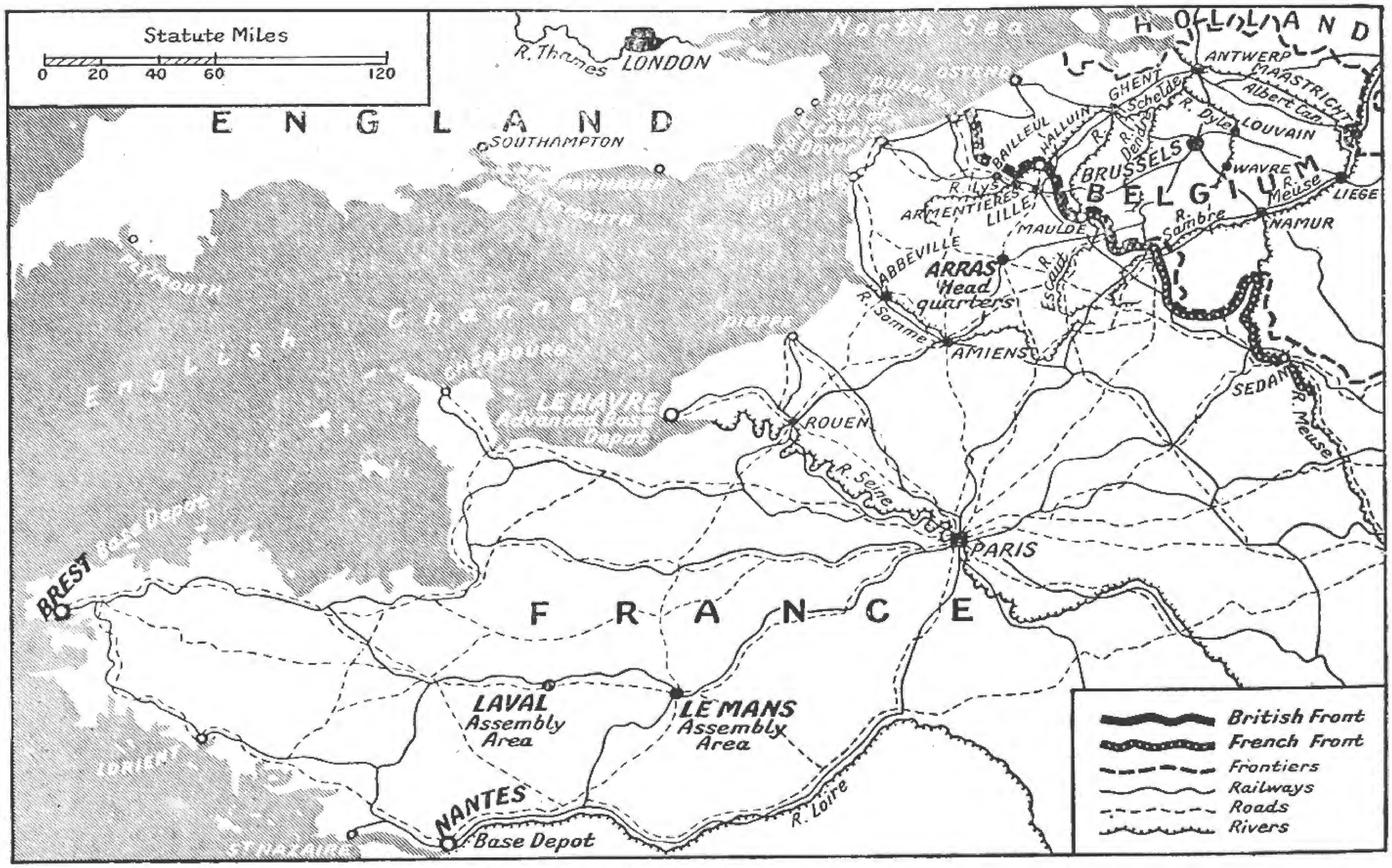
Serious Shortages of the B.E.F.





TRENCH WARFARE HAD LITTLE PLACE IN FRANCE

Despite the lesson of the Polish campaign of 1939 many soldiers expected that the impending war in the West would be one in which the trench warfare of 1914–18 would be repeated. Below, some of the B.E.F. training for the front line in France. At the top, A.A. gunners in a battery mess early in April, 1940. *Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright*



WHERE THE B.E.F. WENT INTO LINE ON THE FRONTIER

British troops landed at Cherbourg, while their stores and vehicles went to Nantes, St. Nazaire and Brest. At the assembly areas near Le Mans and Laval personnel and material were brought together. Between September 26 and October 12, 1939, the B.E.F. took over its allotted sector, from Maulde to Halluin.

useful as they were for their specific purposes, were not designed to carry out the role of the heavily protected and fast "Panzer" (armoured) divisions, or to meet these forces in battle. The Armoured Division had not yet arrived in France, and, as stated above, it never came under Lord Gort's command.

Nor was Lord Gort satisfied that the air component of the B.E.F., under his operational command, was of adequate strength in fighters and bombers for close cooperation with the Army. The deficiencies may be noted as handicaps in subsequent operations, but discussion of the reasons for them would be out of place until the lessons of the war are studied with a view to forming a post-war military policy.

Another question that may be asked is whether the arrangement was satisfactory by which Lord Gort was placed under General Gamelin's command, and in practice received orders from General Georges, commanding the French Force of the North-East. Although the text is not given, the instructions Lord Gort received evidently differed widely from those given to French in 1914, and differed also from the agreement by which Haig cooperated with Pétain under Foch's supreme strategical direction. Haig never received orders from Pétain, commanding the French Army, although parts of his force might be lent to Pétain for specific operations. The agreement made to secure unity of command under Gamelin may or may not have been wise, but it certainly subordinated the action of the B.E.F. to French strategical plans and left Gort responsible only for carrying out orders he received, with as much liberty of action as commanders of French armies, but no more—except so far as Gort presumably retained the right to refer to his own Government should he consider his force to be unduly endangered by orders received.

Plans for rendering support to Belgium and Holland, should one or both be invaded, were discussed with General Georges shortly after the B.E.F. arrived in France, in order that the part to be played by the B.E.F. could be studied. But Lord Gort's conception of his responsibilities is worth quoting. He writes:

"The question of such an advance (i.e. into the Low Countries) was one of high policy with a political as well as a military aspect; it was therefore not for me to comment on it. My responsibilities were confined to ensuring that the orders issued by the French for the employment of the B.E.F. were capable of being carried out; and indeed events proved that the orders issued for the operation were well within the capacity of the Force."

It would thus seem that, although Gort might not be convinced that the plan adopted by the French was the best, he was prepared to play his part in it, provided that he considered it within his capacity—even though he might have been in favour of an alternative plan.

The alternative plans can be given in outline; they were three in number. The first was to remain in the frontier defences which had been constructed, merely pushing forward mobile troops to the line of the Escaut river. This alternative was at once discarded and is not discussed in the despatches, presumably because the objections to it were obviously largely political. It would only have provided for the defence of France and would have left the armies of the Low Countries unsupported, except so far as it furnished a rallying line in case they were forced to abandon their territory to the enemy. The second alternative was to advance to and hold the line of the Escaut from Maulde (where it crossed the frontier)

to Ghent, where it was intended to effect a junction with Belgian forces.

The intention at first was to adopt this second plan, which was simple and involved only a day's march on foot. The Escaut, when demolition had been carried out, would have been a formidable and defensible obstacle. The plan also envisaged pushing cavalry forward to the Dendre river in order to carry out demolition there and to fight a delaying action. Later, however, to quote the despatches,

> "when information became available regarding the defences of the Belgian Army and its readiness for war, the French High Command formed the opinion that it would be safe to count on the Belgian defence holding out for some days on the eastern frontier and the Albert Canal."

It was also learnt that the Belgians were constructing an anti-tank obstacle running from Wavre to Namur.

In view of these circumstances it was decided that the advance should be to the Dyle. The B.E.F. was to occupy the sector Wavre to Louvain, both inclusive, with the 1st French Army on its right covering the Gembloux gap between Wavre and Namur, where, since no natural obstacle existed, the general line of the Belgian anti-tank obstacle would be held. North of Louvain on the British left the 7th French Army was to support Belgian resistance, and possibly that of the Dutch.

The main advantages of the Dyle line were that it was shorter than the Escaut line and had greater depth; that it took advantage of the anti-tank obstacle and other works constructed by the Belgians; that its northern portion was protected by inundations, and that it involved a smaller surrender of Belgian territory.

On the other hand, the Dyle plan meant an advance of some 60 miles, which would have to be carried out partly at least on foot, probably under air attack, and at a time when every moment was of value. Moreover, under the Belgian policy of absolute neutrality no consultation with the Belgian General Staff was practicable; nor could the roads to be used or the positions to be occupied be previously reconnoitred.

It was learnt early in May that the Belgians had decided to site the tank obstacle farther east than had been originally intended, and that this defence was still incomplete. Exact information as to its position and condition was not obtainable before Belgium was invaded, though it was learnt that it ran from Louvain instead of from Wavre to Namur. This was one of the many handicaps in framing plans that the Belgian attitude imposed on the Allied High Command. The change in the siting of the tank obstacle did not directly affect Lord Gort's plans to a great extent, as he had received General Georges' permission to hold the line of the Dyle, which formed a better obstacle. Indirectly, however, the B.E.F. suffered from the effects of changes made necessary in French dispositions.

After the discussion of the various alternatives, which appears to have terminated in the middle of November, Commanders and Staffs commenced to study in detail both the Escaut and Dyle plans, henceforth known as the "E" and "D" plans, in readiness to put either into immediate operation. Orders and instructions were drawn up in the fullest detail and kept up to date as new divisions arrived or as divisions changed their positions. It required only the signalling of the letter D or E to bring either plan into operation. Since the plans for the D operation, drawn up in advance, were in fact carried out according to schedule they need not be given here. They are explained by the movements described in Chapter 148. The forward movement was planned to cover four periods, totalling in all ten days. Movements in the first period, owing to the importance of the time factor, were to be continuous by day and night. The risk was accepted that air support would be insufficient to prevent enemy interference.



FRONT-LINE TRAINING FOR THE B.E.F.

To gain experience, certain British units replaced their French comrades in advanced sectors on the Western front. Right, afte· Cameronians had taken over a blockhouse : the troops present arms. Below, some of the first Militiamen to go overseas return to billets after exercises behind the line in France.

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Chapter 148

VISCOUNT GORT'S DESPATCHES: (2) THE FIGHTING AND THE DUNKIRK RETREAT

Continuing the commentary begun in Chapter 147, Sir Charles Gwynn here explains the course of operations during the advance of the B.E.F. to the frontiers, the withdrawal made imperative by the collapse of the French armies and the Belgian capitulation, and the fighting retreat to Dunkirk. For an appreciation of the situation on the Belgian front during the period May 10-28 the reader should refer to Chapters 145 and 146

In spite of the growing tension during April and the early days of May, it was not till the night of May 9–10 that Lord Gort had information of exceptional activity on the neutral frontiers. The first definite indication came about 4.30 a.m. on the 10th, when enemy aircraft flew over his H.Q. at Arras and dropped bombs on neighbouring aerodromes. At 5.30 a.m. he received the signal for instant readiness to move, followed at 6.15 by instructions to carry out the D plan (*see* Chapter 147). The fateful decision to advance to Dyle had been taken.

Zero hour for the advance was fixed for 1 p.m., at which time the 12th Royal Lancers (armoured cars) would be ready to cross the frontier. It was an army regiment scheduled to take up a position of observation 8 miles beyond the Dyle till relieved by divisional cavalry. By 10.30 p.m. it had reached the Dyle without opposition. Following it in motor transport came the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Divisions, which, although allowed 90 hours for the move, had occupied the assigned British front by the 12th. By May 16 movements of the remainder of the B.E.F., by route march or motorized conveyance, were also well ahead of the pre-arranged programme, which had allowed 10 days for its completion in essentials. This was partly due to the fact that hostile air interference was much less than was expected —to an extent that began to arouse suspicions. Nor was the B.E.F. seriously attacked while occupying the Dyle line, although on the 15th a local counter-attack was necessary to recover some of our forward positions which had been penetrated. On the whole, by May 16 the B.E.F. had reached its allotted front and was well established in depth. (*See* Map 1, in page 1539).

News of our Allies was disquieting. On May 11 it had been learnt that bridges at Maastricht had been captured by the enemy; and a very gallant attempt by British bombers to destroy them failed to deny passage to the Germans. The enemy's progress was checked by a counter-attack of the French Cavalry Corps, but large concentrations were reported north of the Albert Canal. The R.A.F. had taken what opportunities were offered to impede the enemy's advance, but his anti-aircraft defences and shortage of the B.E.F. Air Component in fighting aircraft (reduced by casualties to 50) prevented persistent attacks. Unfortunately, of the four extra squadrons of fighters asked for by Gort, one only had yet arrived, and the main bomber force in England was still engaged in attacking targets in Germany, at the time apparently not attempting to cooperate directly with the armies.

In his "Berlin Diary" Mr. W. L. Shirer, describing his visit to Belgium while operations there were in progress, notes with astonishment that the Allied air forces were making no attempt to attack the targets presented by the long columns of German troops and transport. This seems, in part at least, to have been due to General Gamelin's instructions still prohibiting bombing that might endanger civilians. It must be admitted, however, that air action in this war has failed to check the movements of armies to the extent that had been expected, even when air supremacy had been secured.

By May 13 the Belgian Army was in process of withdrawing to come into line on the left of the B.E.F. between Louvain and Antwerp, and an arrangement had been reached that the action of the Belgian Army and the B.E.F. should be coordinated by General Billotte, under whose command were the 1st and 7th French Armies. This was a very necessary step, since King Leopold was an independent commander and Lord Gort was responsible only to General Georges; but it is questionable whether General Billotte ever exercised to the full the powers which had been conferred upon him.

Worse news was to come when, on the 15th, the Dutch Army was compelled to surrender and the Germans forced the passage of the Meuse at Sedan and to the north of this city. Reports of a threatening move of armoured divisions through Luxemburg and the Ardennes had been received as early as May 12, but the French had under-



BRITISH AND FRENCH COMMANDERS

Lord Gort, Commander-in-Chief British Expeditionary Force, in earnest conversation with General Georges (left), Commander of the French Front of the North-East. General Gort, together with General Ironside, had just been decorated with the Grande Croix of the Legion of Honour (January, 1940). See pages 620-621.

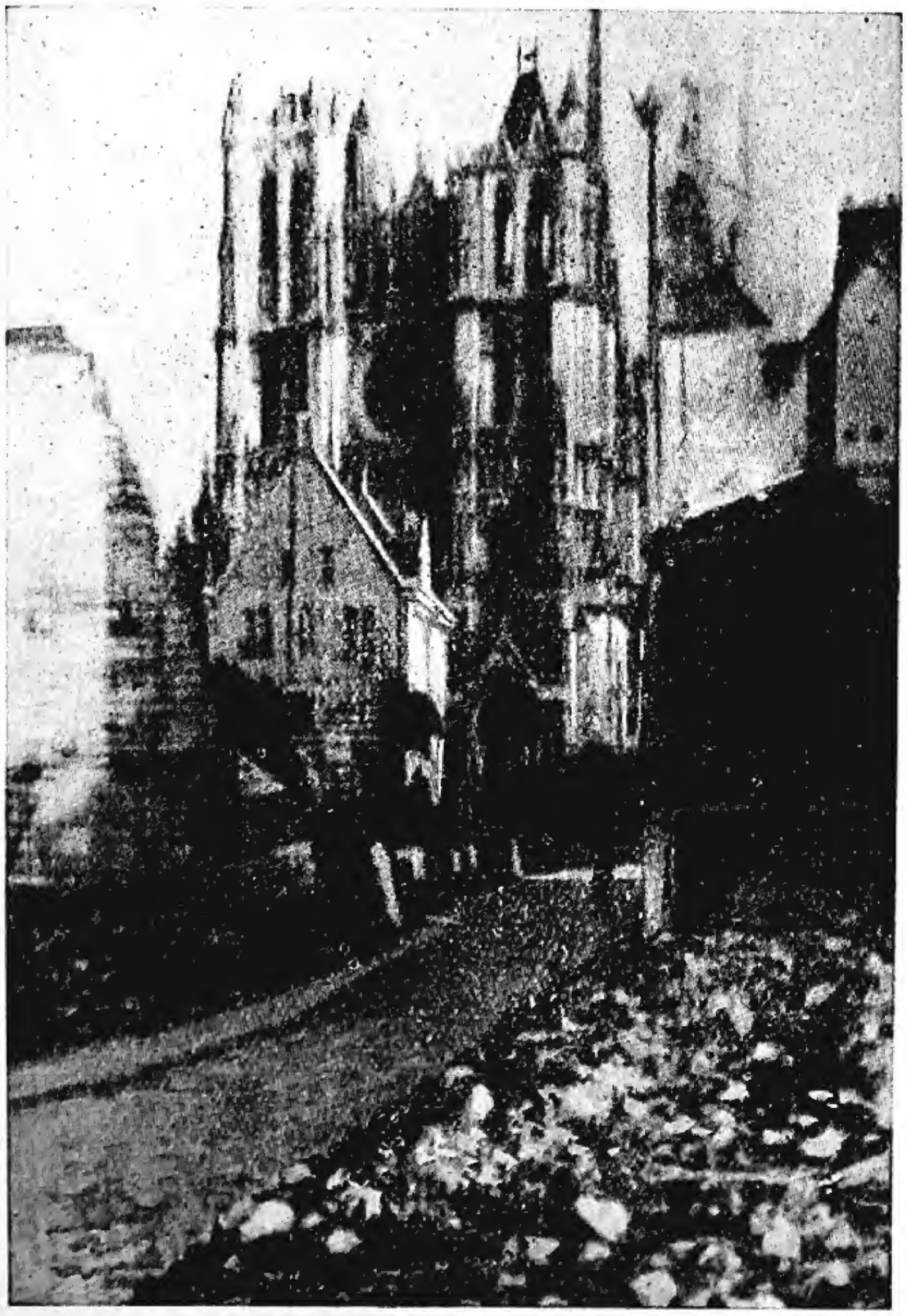
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estimated both the strength and the speed with which the threat would develop, and it may have been only a coincidence that on that day Lord Gort asked the War Office to expedite the despatch of the Armoured Division as much as possible.

As a consequence the 7th French Army was ordered south, moving across the British lines of communication (*see* Map 1, page 1539)—a difficult operation completed by May 18 without undue confusion, owing to good traffic control. The French 1st Army also withdrew its cavalry and advanced troops from the ill-sited tank obstacle to the Gembloux line; but, threatened in front, flank and rear, the Gembloux position was becoming untenable. The B.E.F. front was still not seriously attacked, though assistance had to be sent to the French, whose front had been penetrated near its point of junction with the B.E.F. Three squadrons of fighters, just arrived from England, had also to be sent to the French front.

Early on May 16 Lord Gort, realizing that prolonged resistance on the Dyle position was no longer practicable, asked General Billotte to give him warning of his plans if retreat were intended; and at 10 a.m. Gort received orders to commence retirement to the Escaut, the move to begin on the night of May 16–17 and to be complete on the night of May 18–19. The retreat had now begun, and it is the consequent problems and decisions of the Commander and not the experiences of the troops that Lord Gort's despatches record.

On the 17th withdrawal some 15 to 20 miles to the Senne was completed, the only incident that affected future operations being that part of the Tank Brigade, which had started to withdraw for entrainment, had to turn about in order to protect the right flank against a threatened attack by German tanks. The threat did not develop, but when the tanks returned for entrainment there were railway difficulties and the trucks could not be moved. A serious consequence of this was that the remainder of the move had to be carried out by road, leading later on to mechanical troubles. Among the precautionary measures taken on the 15th was the order to the three working-party divisions—12th, 23rd and 46th—to take over the protection of the line of communication north of the Somme, relieving fully trained troops of this duty. All three divisions, with the exception of two brigades of the 12th Division at Abbeville, became involved in the northern battle zone.



AMIENS, H.Q. OF BRITISH FIFTH DIVISION

Though surrounding streets were severely bombed, the Cathedral at Amiens had not apparently been much damaged at this period (August, 1949). General Headquarters reserve was at a place south-west of Amiens. Here also most of the 5th Division (in War Office reserve) was stationed.

Photo, Wide World

By the morning of May 17 news was received that the German Panzer thrust, now reported to be of 10 divisions, had crossed the Oise—indicating that the communications of the B.E.F. were in great danger, especially as there was a gap of 20 miles in which the thrust would meet no organized resistance.

The situation was obscure; Gort had to rely on such reports as his Liaison Staff at General Georges' H.Q. could send him, and he received no information as to the measures the French were taking to meet the situation. Not till the night of May 19–20 did General Billotte tell the British Commander-in-Chief of the action being taken in the south.

Leaving the main body of the B.E.F. to continue its retreat to the Escaut, it is now necessary to follow the steps taken to protect its threatened communications. Measures had already been taken to provide local defence, especially against parachute activities, at all centres in the rear area, of which Arras was the most important.

As a more serious threat developed every man and every weapon available was pressed into service. Many of the men were without training in combatant duties, but, nevertheless, centres of resistance were formed such as the Home Guard might provide in England, and they were to prove their value. The only troops capable of movement and manoeuvre were the three working-party divisions mentioned above, and these were only partly trained and had not full equipment: artillery, signals, anti-tank and anti-aircraft units were lacking, as well as many transport vehicles. Yet on the 17th General Georges ordered the 23rd Division to hold a front of 15 miles on the Canal du Nord, and after being provided with about 40 field, anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns from ordnance reserves it took up its position that day. Later the leading battalion of a brigade of the 12th Division prolonged its right to cover the approaches to Péronne.

In order to protect the right flank of the Escaut position which rested on the Franco-Belgian frontier, a special force (to be known as Macforce) of one brigade, 42nd Division, one field artillery regiment and the 1st Army Tank Brigade, was formed under Major-General Mason-MacFarlane. This reduced the gap between the left of the 23rd Division and the right of the B.E.F. main position on the Escaut. Major-General Petre, commanding the 12th Division, was given command of the troops in Arras and those on the Canal du Nord (namely the 23rd Division and one brigade of the 12th



WAR ARTIST WITH THE B.E.F.

As in the war of 1914-1918, a group of Official War Artists was appointed in 1939 to portray for posterity the manifold aspects of Britain's war effort. Some of them accompanied expeditions overseas, and the drawing here reproduced is an impression by Edward Ardizzone of a street in Louvain in May, 1940, just before the bridge was blown up in front of the German advance.

British Official: Crown Copyright

Division), the whole to be known as Petreforce. (*See* Map 2, in page 1538.)

A serious consequence of the German thrust was its effect on the R.A.F. organization. On May 18 the Advanced Air Striking Force had to move from Rheims to central France; and the "air component" of the B.E.F. moved its main operational base to Abbeville, only to be forced to evacuate it on the 19th. Subsequently the Air Component operated from England, although an advanced landing ground was maintained until May 22 in France. These moves while in progress greatly reduced the amount of air support which could be given, and after the 21st all arrangements for air support were made by the War Office in conjunction with the Air Ministry.

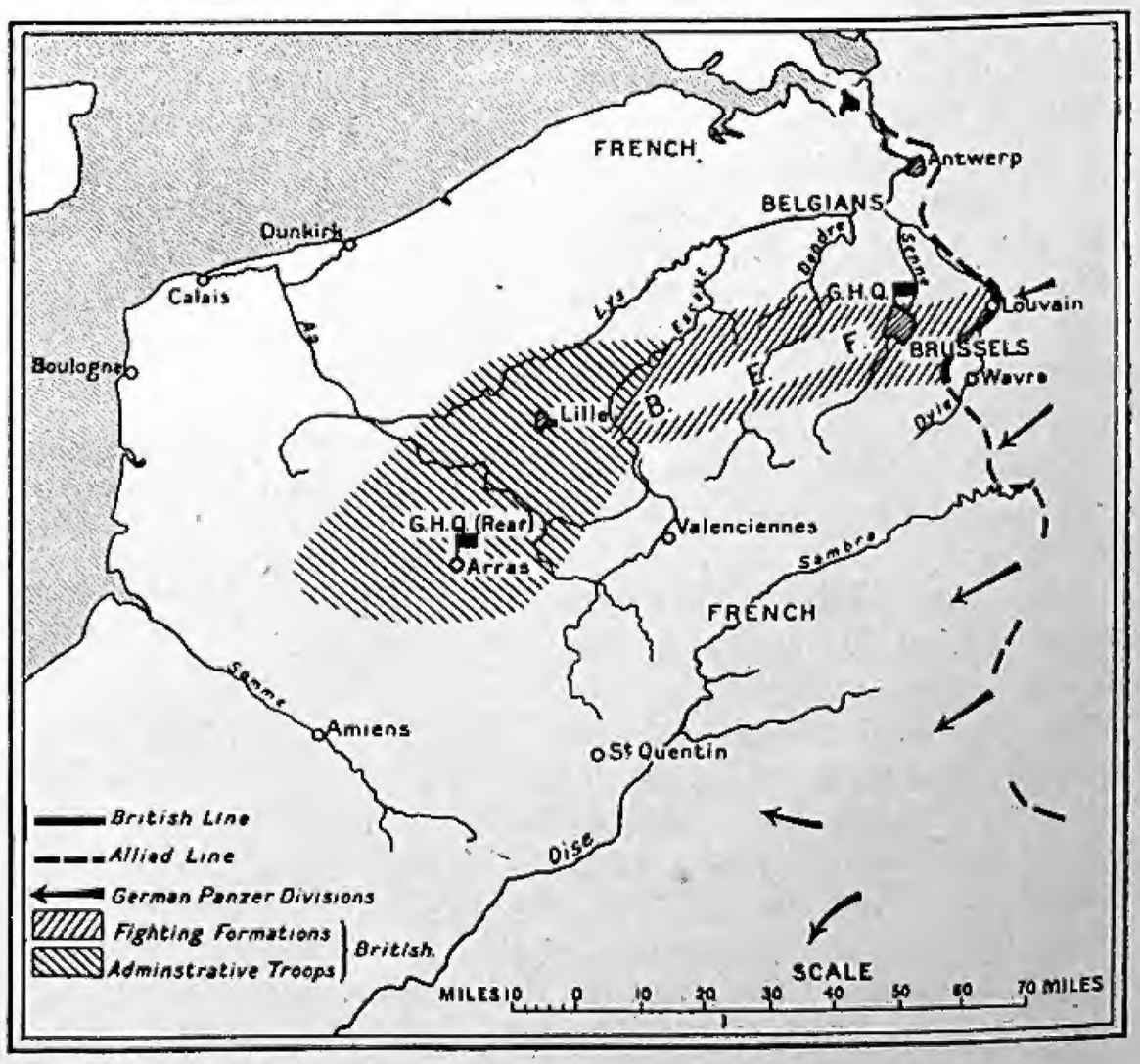
To return now to the main body of the B.E.F., it completed its withdrawal to the Escaut without interference by the night of May 18–19 as ordered, and was prepared to defend the line. But the water of the river had become low (less than 3 feet in places) owing, it is believed, to the closing of sluices in order to cause inundations on the French front near Valenciennes. Furthermore, by that time the enemy had cut the main line of communications through Amiens, and though communications through Abbeville were still open, this town was in imminent danger.

The general situation on the 18th was that the British and Belgian Armies were facing east on a front in a straight line of about 110 miles between Antwerp and the Somme at Péronne. Of this front the B.E.F. held about 70 miles, but the southern stretch of about 45 miles, between the Belgian frontier and the Somme, was defended only with weak, incomplete formations. East of the southern section were the greatly depleted 1st French Army and the remains of the 9th, engaged with the enemy in the frontier area about Maubeuge and Valenciennes. Both French and Belgians had already suffered heavily.

The only reinforcement in sight for the B.E.F. was the Armoured Division, two brigades of which had been due to disembark at Havre on May 16. Gort sent instructions to its commander to move his leading brigade on disembarkation with all speed to secure the crossing of the Somme west of Amiens, with a view to the advance of the division as a whole to join the B.E.F. Unfortunately, under local orders, the Armoured Division on disembarkation concentrated south of the Seine and never came under Gort's effective command. Why the local orders were given, and by whom, is not revealed; but Gort does not conceal his view that if his instructions had been carried out the division might have vitally affected subsequent developments.

On May 19, though the main body of the B.E.F. and the 1st French Army were not under severe pressure, the German thrust farther south necessitated withdrawal of the weakly held extension of the right flank. The 1st French Army withdrew from Maubeuge to the Escaut, with their right thrown back from Arleux to Douai and their left in touch with the right of the main British position at Maulde. Eight French divisions were in consequence crowded into a quadrilateral 19 miles by 10. Petreforce also withdrew from the Canal du Nord to the Scarpe, 6 miles east of Arras, with its right extended to Doulens. Arras thus became a bastion on the flank, but the German thrust which had reached Amiens threatened to turn it. An extension to the west of the line held by

French Withdraw to the Escaut



BEFORE THE WITHDRAWAL TO THE ESCAUT

This map shows the position of the B.E.F. on May 16, 1940. That night began the withdrawal to the Senne canals and the rivers Dendre and Escaut, the latter line being reached on the night of May 18-19. (See also coloured maps in pp. 1538-39.)

From an Official War Office Map, by permission of H.M. Stationery Office

BRITAIN ANSWERED BELGIUM'S CALL

On May 10, 1940, King Leopold told his people that advance troops of France and Britain were pushing forward to join up with Belgian forces in repelling the German invasion that had begun that morning. Here are photographs of British units in Belgium. Top, supply lorries halted in a city square ; left, Bren gun carriers being directed by a British traffic control ; below, more carriers parked on the green verge of a road not far from the front line ; refugees with laden cycles push on in search of safety.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright

Macforce was therefore necessary, and the 50th Motorized Division from G.H.Q. reserve was sent to a position north-west of Arras, to secure crossings of the canal to La Bassée. The 12th Lancers were also moved to Arras to reconnoitre south of the town and gain touch with outlying detachments of Petreforce. By the evening of the 19th the position of the armies in the north had in fact become one of an army shut up in a besieged fortress. (*See* Map 2 in p. 1538.)

On the night of May 18–19 General Billotte had met Lord Gort to discuss the situation and inform him of French plans. Billotte was apparently not hopeful that attempts to restore the French 9th Army's position would succeed, and Gort was unable to verify that reserves were available south of the gap (caused by the disaster to the 9th Army) to warrant a belief that it could be closed.

There were, therefore, in Gort's opinion, three alternatives which the armies north of the gap might adopt.

First. if the gap could be closed by simultaneous counter-attacks from north and south, the line of the Escaut, or the frontier defences, might perhaps be held.

Secondly, there was a possibility of withdrawing to the line of the Somme as far as its mouth; but this would entail leaving the Belgians unsupported if they were unwilling to abandon Belgian territory. This course had not, to Lord Gort's knowledge, been suggested at any time up to date, and he considers that even if it had been adopted as soon as the 9th Army front was broken, it is doubtful whether there would have been time for troops in the north to carry it out.

Thirdly, there was the possibility of withdrawal north-westward to the Channel ports, holding successive rearguard positions to cover evacuation. This course, however, obviously entailed the withdrawal of the B.E.F. from France at a time when the French would stand in greatest need of British help; and it also implied, even under favourable embarkation conditions, the abandonment of heavy guns, many of the vehicles and much of the equipment of the B.E.F. It was a last alternative, but might prove the only one possible.

On the 19th, therefore, Lord Gort discussed the situation with the War Office by telephone. In consequence, presumably, early on the 20th the C.I.G.S., General Ironside, arrived at B.E.F. H.Q. with instructions from the Cabinet for the B.E.F. to attempt to break south to Amiens and to take station on the left of the main French Army. Gort was also to inform General Billotte and the Belgian Command of these orders, and to make it clear to the latter that their best chance was to move back between the B.E.F. and the coast. Notification of this instruction was to be conveyed by the War Office to General Weygand, who, though he had not yet officially replaced General Gamelin, was already directing operations from General Georges' H.Q.

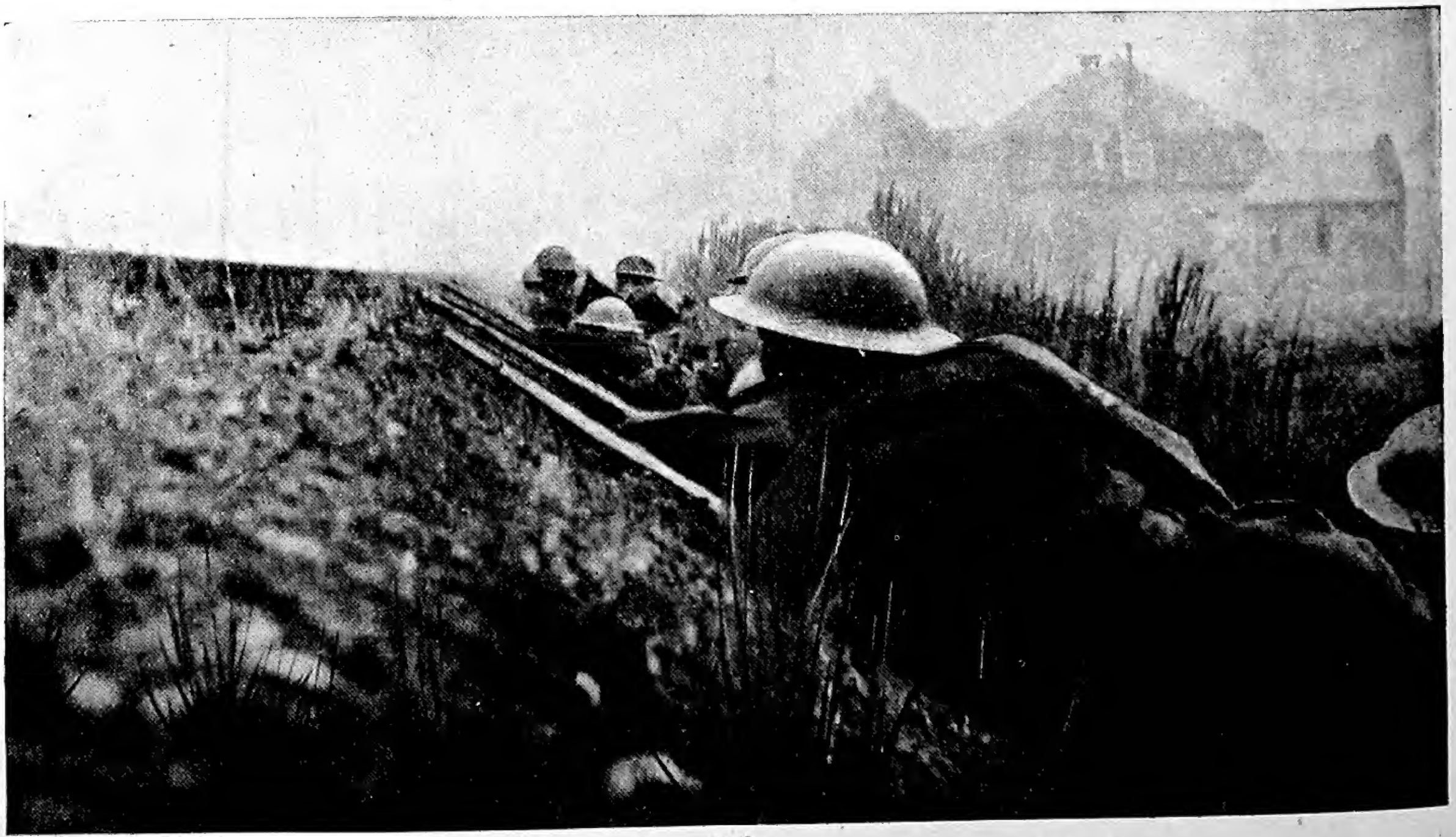
At a discussion that followed Lord Gort was compelled to explain to the C.I.G.S. that in his own view the proposed manoeuvre was not practicable if carried out by the B.E.F. alone, and that his impression was that neither the 1st French Army nor the Belgians were in a position to conform with it. For the B.E.F. it would entail disengaging the seven divisions on the Escaut in close contact with the enemy, who would certainly follow up the withdrawal vigorously. In addition to the consequent rearguard actions the B.E.F. would simultaneously have to attack into an area strongly occupied by the enemy's armoured and mobile formations, and finally to break through his forces established on the Somme. During all these engagements the B.E.F. would have its flanks exposed and would have no assurance of replenishment of ammunition and supplies expended, except by what was carried

Ill-fated 'Weygand Plan'

INCIDENT IN THE FIGHTING RETREAT TO THE COAST

This vivid photograph, taken at close range, shows British troops holding a railway embankment to the north-west of Brussels. Soon after, following the collapse of the French 9th Army, the Allied line was withdrawn behind the Escaut, and the Belgian capital was left defenceless.

Photo, Associated Press











LEADERS OF MACFORCE, PETREFORCE, FRANKFORCE & POLFORCE

Top, left, Lt.-Gen. F. N. Mason Macfarlane, C.B., D.S.O., commanded Macforce, whose task was to cover crossings of the Scarpe between Rachies and St. Amand (May 17). Top, right, Maj.-Gen. R. L. Petre, C.B., D.S.O., after commanding 12th Division took over on May 18 Petreforce, comprising 23rd Division, 36th Infantry Brigade, and garrison of Arras. Lower left, Lt.-Gen. H. E. Franklyn, C.B., D.S.O., first commanded 5th Division and on May 21 took over command of all British troops in and around Arras (Frankforce). Lower right, Maj.-Gen. H. O. Curtis, C.B., D.S.O., commander of 46th Division, on May 20 took command in the sector of canals between Aire and Carvin; originally his force (Polforce) was intended to hold St. Pol, Frévent and Divion.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Bassano

not make contact with the detachment at Doullens.

For the counter-attack from Arras Lord Gort decided to use all his available reserves, which consisted of the 50th and 5th Divisions and the Tank Brigade previously with Macforce. These, together with Petreforce (now very tired and dispersed), were placed under the orders of General Franklyn, commanding the 5th Division—the whole being named Frankforce. The operation was planned to take two days, starting at 2 p.m. on the 21st, but it was learnt that the promised French cooperation could not be given till the 22nd or following night. Time was important, so Franklyn adhered to his plans,

in the mobile transport echelons of the force.

Nevertheless, Lord Gort was prepared, and already had drawn up plans, to counter-attack south of Arras with the reserve formations he had available—presumably with the object of checking the enemy's westward penetration and narrowing the gap he had made. The C.I.G.S. agreed with this course and later in the day secured General Billotte's concurrence and a promise that two French divisions would cooperate in the counter-attack to be delivered on the 21st.

Meanwhile, the enemy's armoured thrust was widening and deepening south of Arras, directed along the valley of the Somme towards Abbeville, and from Cambrai towards the Channel ports. It was followed by infantry rushed forward in lorries to secure bridgeheads on the Somme and to hold the sides of the "corridor." The northern column skirted Arras, but was compelled to by-pass it when it encountered the resistance of a defence battalion of the Welsh Guards; later in the day the column was reported 10 miles west of Arras, and the 12th Lancers could having secured the cooperation of General Prioux, commanding the French Cavalry Corps, who provided flank protection with a greatly reduced mechanized division. The objectives on the first day were to relieve the remains of the 23rd Division and to secure a good jumping-off line for the second day's advance towards Bapaume and Cambrai.

The attack was delivered successfully according to plan on May 21 and gained its objectives, though opposition was stronger than expected. The Tank Brigade, which had achieved considerable success, was now suffering greatly from mechanical troubles as a result of constant movement. It was clear that without the support of French troops on the left no progress could be made on the following day, and Franklyn decided on the 22nd to remain in the position won. On the 23rd, as the enemy's progress threatened to encircle the town, withdrawal from Arras was ordered, the 5th and 50th Divisions being drawn back to a reserve position in readiness to take part in any further counter-attacks.

The remainder of Frankforce was used in the protection of the right flank of the Army on what was called the Canal Line. The defence of this line, extending over 80 miles from the Escaut to the sea at Gravelines, provided for the holding of the crossings of the canals and their demolition. The troops employed were chiefly those of the working-party divisions and miscellaneous parties drawn from rearward services. The total numbers available amounted to about 10,000, obviously an insufficient force to watch stretches of the canal between road crossings. By the 22nd the Canal Line was established, organized in sectors each with its own commander. Macforce



DURING RETREAT TO THE ESCAUT ROYAL IRISH FUSILIERS SNATCH A HASTY MEAL

In the withdrawal from the Dyle to the line of the Escaut, and the subsequent hard-pressed retreat to the Dunkirk perimeter, the Royal Irish Fusiliers fought doggedly and gallantly and suffered many casualties. Here is a scene from an early stage of the conflict. Another photograph taken about this period is printed in pages 882-883.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

extended to its right, and a new force under Major-General Curtis and known as Polforce held the line thence to the sea.

Meanwhile, the main front on the Escaut was thinly held, and in places the enemy had obtained a footing across the river, which, through the lowering of the water level, had practically ceased to be an obstacle. Since the Corps Commanders considered it could not be held more than 24 hours longer it was decided to fall back on the night of May 22–23 to the frontier defences from Maulde to Halluin, and thence along the Lys river to Courtrai. The Belgians agreed to conform on the following night and to hold from Courtrai to Ghent, prepared if necessary to swing back to the line of the Yser.

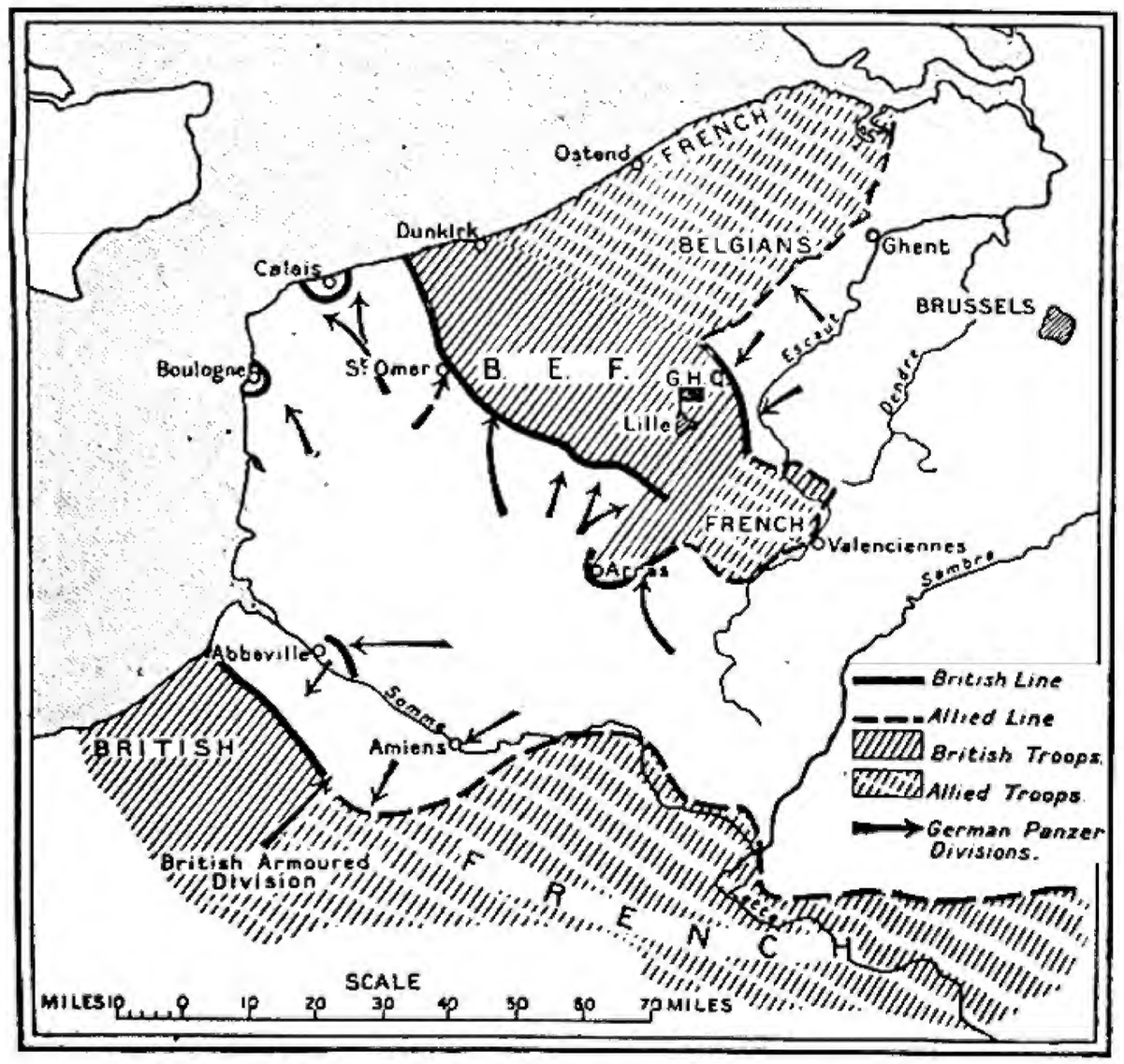
The administrative situation of the B.E.F. was now becoming serious, for on May 21 communication with the south via Abbeville was finally cut, and on the following day both Boulogne and Calais ceased to be available as supply bases. The protection of those ports had been undertaken by the War Office, but Boulogne was evacuated on May 23–24, while Calais, hemmed in, was engaged in its memorable defence. Dunkirk alone remained available as a supply base, but much of the transport necessary to work it to its full capacity had been lost or was south of the Somme.

In spite of the situation the French still adhered to the first alternative of attempting to close the German corridor by counter-attacks from the north and south; and, misled by inaccurate French reports, the British Cabinet supported the plan. General Weygand had hoped to deliver a counter-attack from the direction of Roye on the 22nd, but this plan had failed to mature. Now Weygand was believed to be assembling a larger force, and the 1st French Army and B.E.F. were to strike south to join hands with him. A French report that Péronne and Amiens had been recaptured encouraged hopes that this plan might succeed; but Gort, knowing the depleted condition of the French 1st Army (especially in tanks), his own shortage of ammunition, and the difficulty of withdrawing formations into reserve for the operation, was convinced that the effort from the north could only be in the nature of a sortie, and that the main blow must be struck from the south. In any case the 26th was the earliest date by which Gort would have troops available for the operation.

Cooperation between the components of the Allied forces might prove difficult, because at no time had central control been effective; practically no orders had been received from General Billotte subsequent to the order to retire to the Escaut; and now unfortunately General Billotte had been mortally injured in a motor accident. Nor was the enemy inactive; and his increasing pressure northwards between Arras and the coast necessitated the strengthening of the Canal Line. Nevertheless, in spite of these adverse conditions, plans were drawn up for an attack southwards by three French and two British divisions, to start on the evening of May 26. The 5th and 50th Divisions only were available for the operation, because the 2nd, 44th and 48th Divisions, relieved by the French and the Belgians when withdrawal from the Escaut was carried out, had had to be despatched westwards to strengthen the Canal Line against the growing threat from the south. A part of these forces was also required to organize the defence of Dunkirk, in cooperation with French coast defence troops.

On May 25 enemy activity everywhere increased. The Canal Line to the west and the French front to the east of Arras were heavily attacked. The Belgian line on the Lys had been penetrated on the previous evening, on a front of 13 miles, and behind the Lys there was no satisfactory defensive position east of the Yser Canal. There was, in consequence, a great danger of the Belgian Army being driven north, and of the whole area east of the Yser Canal being overrun by the enemy, who would then be free to attack the left of the B.E.F. and its communications with Dunkirk. It was necessary to prolong and throw back the British left. The 12th Lancers were despatched early on the 25th to watch this flank and to gain touch with the right of the Belgians; a brigade of the 48th Division was also moved to Ypres. Later in the day, considering these measures insufficient, Gort decided that he must use the 5th and 50th Divisions (his only reserve) for the protection of his left, even though that meant the abandonment of the sortie plan. He communicated this decision to General Blanchard (who had succeeded Billotte), and secured his concurrence at a personal meeting early on the 26th. Blanchard had, in fact, felt that the time for the counter-attack had passed, and the two Generals agreed that the immediate problem was to shorten the defensive perimeter, as the only means of ensuring maintenance of communication with Dunkirk and of holding off the German encircling attack. Withdrawal from the frontier defences east of Lille to the Lys between Merville and Comines was therefore agreed on, with the left flank thrown back along the Ypres-Comines Canal. There can be little doubt that this decision saved the Allied Armies from being completely surrounded and cut off from the sea in the subsequent days. (*See* Map 3, in page 1539.)

The withdrawal to the Lys, covered by rearguards, was completed by the main bodies on the night of May 27–28, to be followed the next night by the withdrawal of the rearguards. Congestion of roads by refugees and the non-observance by French transport of the



PLIGHT OF ALLIED NORTHERN ARMIES

This map shows the grave situation of the B.E.F., the Belgian and the French Northern Armies on May 23, 1940. Hemmed in on all sides, and cut off from supplies by the corridor opened by Panzer divisions, Lord Gort was being urged to cooperate in the Weygand plan for a counter-offensive southwards. (See also colour maps in pp. 1538-39.)
From an Official War Office Map, by permission of H.M. Stationery Office

agreed allotment of routes had added greatly to the difficulties of the operation. The result, however, was to shorten by 58 miles the previous defensive perimeter of 128 miles, 97 of which had been held by British troops. There remained the possibility that the 25-mile stretch between Ypres and the sea, still the responsibility of the Belgians, might have to be occupied, for the condition of the Belgian army had now become a source of anxiety.

On the whole the situation for the time being was more secure, but there still remained a vital decision to be made which had not been discussed at the meeting with General Blanchard. Was there to be a further withdrawal to the sea? And, if so, would it be in order to hold a bridgehead at Dunkirk or to evacuate as much of the forces as possible?

It was not till later in the day on the 26th, after meeting General Blanchard, that Lord Gort received telegrams from the War Office intimating that the Government had received information that a French offensive from the Somme could not now hope to effect a junction with the armies in the north, and ordering Gort to make plans to fight his way to the coast, and to evacuate the B.E.F. with the full support of the Navy and R.A.F. A later telegram stated that the French Government had been informed, and that Weygand would no doubt issue orders. That gave Gort his authority, and in acknowledging the order he warned the British Government that it would entail abandoning the greater part of the B.E.F.'s equipment, even in the best circumstances.

General Blanchard had received no similar instructions, and even after he had agreed to establish, and to withdraw into, a bridgehead at Dunkirk it was clear that the French General had no orders which permitted him to carry out an evacuation. In fact, on the 27th, Weygand had issued an Order of the Day enjoining a resolute attitude; and his representative urged Blanchard to attempt a counter-attack for the recapture of Calais—an operation for which the latter had practically no troops available, and could therefore not undertake. A further difficulty arose when, at a conference on the 28th, Blanchard informed Gort that General Prioux, now commanding the 1st French Army in the area between Lille and Béthune, had reported that as his troops were too tired to make further moves he intended to remain in that area protected by the quadrangle of canals which enclosed it. Lord Gort used all his eloquence to induce Blanchard to order Prioux back, and insisted that he himself intended to retire that night to the Cassel-Ypres line, in conformity with orders to carry through evacuation. Eventually there was a change in the French attitude, and part at least of the 1st French Army was evacuated.



HARD PRESSED BELGIANS TAKE A BRIEF RESPITE

This photograph, of Belgian troops resting by a road along which a British Army lorry is passing, was taken in the first few days of the conflict. On May 12 the Belgian High Command ordered a withdrawal behind the Antwerp-Namur line. Two days later a further retreat became imperative—this time to the line of the Escaut.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

It was not till late on May 27 that Lord Gort received his first intimation that the King of the Belgians had asked for an armistice—to commence at midnight. Fortunately, the enemy made no immediate attempt to push through the 20-mile gap thus formed before it could be occupied on the 28th. On this day the outer ring of the line held by the B.E.F. had closed in to within a comparatively short distance of the now organized bridgehead defences, in which each corps had been allotted its section. From that time onward the withdrawal of the troops into the bridgehead was mainly the duty of Corps Commanders and represented a tactical and administrative problem, description of which would be impossible to give adequately or appropriately in a chapter intended to review the strategical aspects of the campaign. The final dispositions are best illustrated by the Map 3 in page 1539. They cannot be described in detail.

In his note on the lessons of the campaign Lord Gort points out that there was no failure on the part of the B.E.F. to withstand the enemy attacks when holding chosen positions. It suffered from the strategic consequences of an enemy break-through miles away from its own front. He points out how much the B.E.F. was handicapped by the lack of equipment equal to that which gave the enemy offensive power. Neither in numbers nor in type could the British equipment in armoured vehicles compare with that of the enemy; nor was defensive anti-tank armament sufficient to protect the rear zones in which the enemy's armoured troops could cause the greatest havoc. The obvious conclusion is that material sets the pace in organizing armies. The days are past when armies can be hurriedly raised and placed in the field. In actual operations, too, speed has become a dominant factor, and speed involves the necessity of taking risks in the absence of full information. It involves, too, rapid decisions, followed by the issue and rapid transmission of short orders. The elaborate detailed orders and the precise signal procedure which were a legacy of the static conditions of the First Great War were found to be totally inapplicable.

There is no doubt, too, though not mentioned in his notes, that the C.-in-C. was not satisfied that cooperation between the Army and Air Force was organized in a manner to serve the needs of the Army in rapidly moving situations. To read of requests for the War Office to arrange with the Air Ministry in England for bombing cooperation in rapidly developing situations in France gives food for thought, even though a willingness to comply with the request was not lacking. Modern warfare does not admit of cumbrous procedure. Fortunately, even in modern warfare, the morale and fighting spirit of the troops is still a dominant factor, and Lord Gort testifies that the British Expeditionary Force possessed those qualities to a high degree.



BRITISH ANTI-TANK GUN POST ON LOUVAIN-WAVRE SECTOR

At Louvain three divisions of the B.E.F. were in position on the Belgian right by May 13, 1940. Troops of the French 1st Army held the line from Wavre to Namur, with the French 9th and 2nd Armies continuing to the Maginot Line. When Panzer divisions broke through and took Sedan on May 13, the Allied line from Antwerp to Namur was abandoned and a retreat executed to the Escaut.

Photo, British Official Crown Copyright



THE LAST STAND AT CALAIS CITADEL—MAY, 1940

On May 25 Brigadier Claude Nicholson established Brigade H.Q. in Calais Citadel, which was held by 800 French troops. Blasted by continuous bombing and shelling, this 16th-century fortress was carried by assault late in the following afternoon, the Brigadier being trapped and taken prisoner. In the words of the artist, Mr. Charles M. Gere, R.A., this spirited impression of the defence "is an attempt to give a sense of sustained and heroic resistance."

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Chapter 149

THE 51st (Highland) DIVISION AND THE 1st ARMOURED DIVISION IN THE BATTLE OF FRANCE

Lieut.-Gen. Sir Douglas Brownrigg, K.C.B., D.S.O., the writer of this Chapter, commanded the 51st (Highland) Division from 1935 to 1938 and was Adjutant-General of the B.E.F. His personal knowledge therefore qualifies him to present the following story of the 51st Division's valorous part in the Battle, much of which is so far unpublished. Episodes are printed in Chapter 93

SUCH information as the writer has been able to secure for the compilation of the following story has come from several sources. He realizes that dates may be inaccurate and details erroneous, but it is hoped that, when the time comes for the official history to be written, this brief attempt to describe the events of those tragic days south of the Somme will not be found to have given a false picture of what actually occurred—a picture of calm leadership under great difficulty and gallantry against hopeless odds.

First, some brief account must be given of events prior to the opening of the German assault on May 10, 1940. (For fuller details the reader is referred to Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn's commentary on Lord Gort's Despatches, in Chapter 147.)

The strength of the B.E.F. when it landed in France during September and October, 1939, was 158,000 men and 25,000 mechanical vehicles. This force comprised the I and II Corps under the command of Lieut.-General Sir John Dill and Lieut.-General Alan Brooke; G.H.Q. troops; and Lines of Communication troops under the late Major-General P. de Fonblanque. Each corps consisted of two divisions and of corps troops.

By May, 1940, the strength of the force had grown to approximately 400,000 men, and the original two corps had expanded into three, each consisting of three divisions. Besides

Twelve British Divisions

the nine divisions in the three corps there were three Territorial divisions which had been sent to France primarily for labour duties on the Lines of Communication and in the forward area; these were minus artillery and most of the normal ancillary services.

Amongst the nine fully equipped divisions which had arrived in France between November, 1939, and May, 1940, was the 51st (Highland) Division under the command of Major-General Victor Fortune. The writer had the honour of commanding this division from 1935 to 1938, and can give personal testimony to the magnificent quality of its human material. On arrival in France in January and February, 1940, the Highland Division was concentrated in the area round Béthune, and later came under the command of Lieut.-General Sir Ronald Adam, who had been appointed commander of the newly formed III Corps.

When active operations started the Highland Division comprised three infantry brigades (the 152nd, 153rd and 154th) under the command of Brigadiers H. W. V. Stewart, the late G. T. Burney (who died as a prisoner of war), and A. C. L. Stanley-Clarke.

The composition of the brigades was as follows:

152nd	153rd
2 Seaforths	1 Gordons
4 Seaforths (T.A.)	5 Gordons (T.A.)
4 Camerons (T.A.)	4 Black Watch (T.A.)

154th
1 Black Watch
7 Argylls (T.A.)
8 Argylls (T.A.)

Each brigade had one regular and two Territorial battalions, and the reason for this is interesting. In the spring of 1939 the Territorial Army was doubled, and as a result the value of the existing Territorial Army was much reduced through the loss of officers and N.C.O.s who had to be sent to command and train the duplicate units. Further, the limited existing accommodation and sparse training equipment were quite insufficient for the needs of the expanded force. The provision of officers was an almost insoluble problem; one Territorial unit came to France with only one officer in the four rifle companies of more than a year's service.

The Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force was naturally apprehensive about the state of training and efficiency of the Territorial units coming under his command. He therefore gave orders that one T.A. battalion should be taken out of every infantry brigade and be replaced by one regular battalion already serving in the B.E.F. Care was taken

HIGHLAND DIVISION OFFICERS IN GERMAN HANDS

This photograph, received from a German prison camp, shows General Fortune (in battle dress) with other officers about to place a wreath on the grave of 2nd Lieut. Cavaye, 4th Camerons, who had died in a German hospital.

Photo, Keystone







HIGHLANDERS IN FRANCE

The Gordon Highlanders formed part of the 153rd Brigade of the Highland Division. Top, General Fagalde inspects the guard of honour from the 5th Batt. ; below, a lecture in tactics by one of the officers, who uses a sand map of the terrain.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

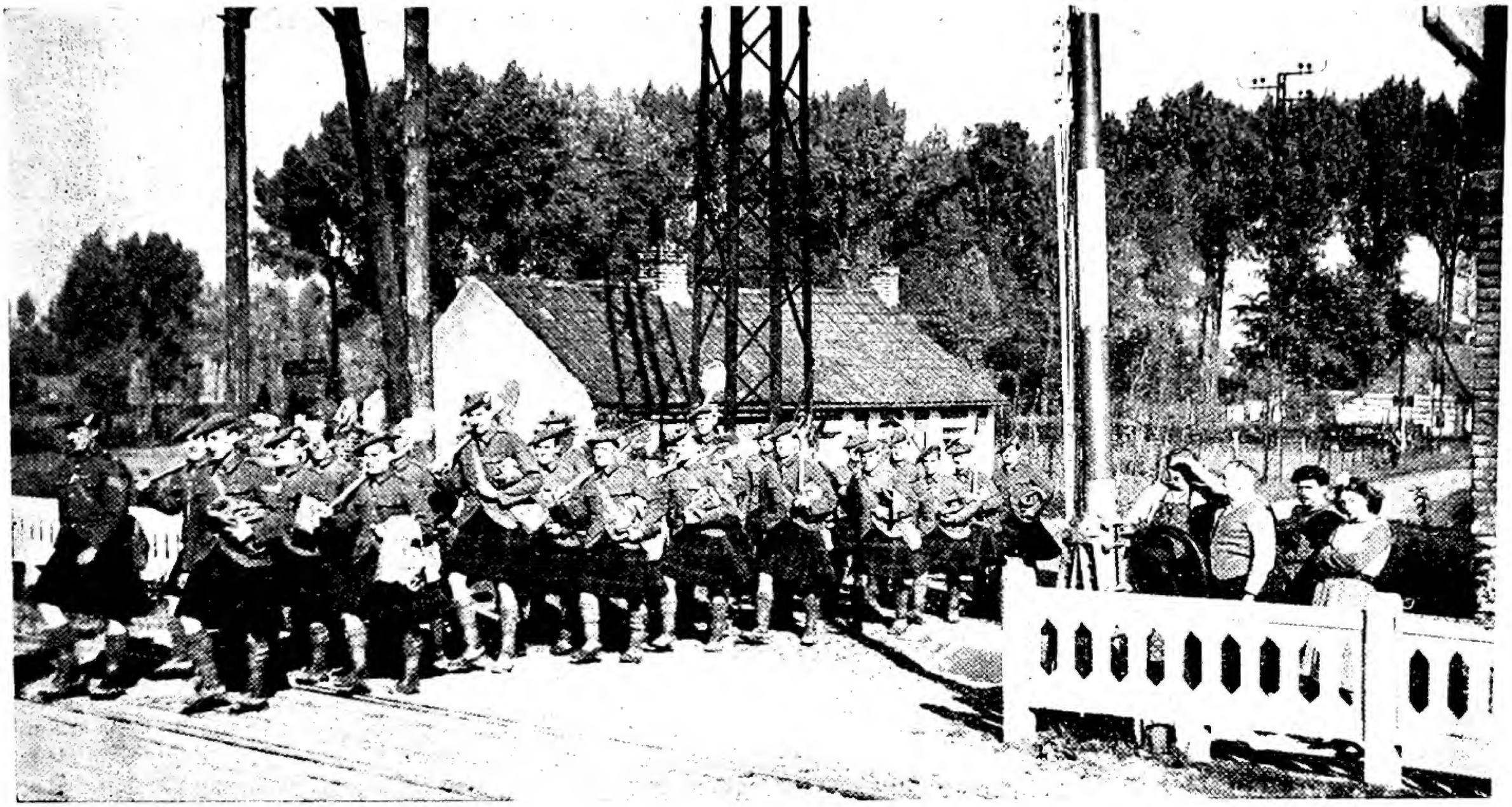
that a Territorial battalion was replaced where possible by a battalion of the same regiment. This explains the appearance of one regular battalion in each brigade of the Highland Division. For the same reason the regular 17th Field Regt. R.A., was brought in to replace the Territorial 77th Field Regiment.

Soon after the arrival of the first British troops in France it had been arranged that two infantry brigades should be sent in rotation to join the French armies on the Saar. One brigade was to occupy a portion of the front along the Maginot Line, while the other remained in and around Metz, ready to relieve the first when it had done a tour of about a fortnight "in the line." There were two reasons for this arrangement. The first was to counteract the German radio propaganda which constantly alleged that, while the French soldier was guarding the frontiers of France, his British comrade was living a life of luxurious ease behind the Belgian frontier, and in his spare time was "breaking up the Frenchman's home." The second reason was to give the infantry of the B.E.F. practical experience in patrolling and outpost work in the face of a live and active enemy. For it must be remembered that the whole of Belgium interposed itself between the Germans and the rest of the B.E.F.

Towards the end of the winter of 1939–1940 it was decided to send to the Saar one complete division instead of the usual force of two infantry brigades, and the 51st (Highland) Division was selected. The brigade in the line did not occupy any of the Maginot forts, but held a position in front to a depth of about seven miles. The Maginot forts were left in charge of their permanent French garrisons.

There was a rather ludicrous suggestion current that the Highland Division was chosen as the first complete formation to go to the Saar because it was thought that the French liked the appearance of the kilt. But the troops of the Highland Division wore battle dress like the rest of the B.E.F., and, when wearing steel helmets, were indistinguishable from other British troops.

The winter had been particularly severe, but since it was late spring when the Highland Division proceeded to the Saar, the troops did not experience the bitterly cold conditions of the earlier



GORDONS AT WORK IN THE LINE

Some of the Gordon Highlanders (1st Batt.) are here seen after taking over a sector of the French line for training. Top, a working party at a level crossing ; below, constructing trenches and breastworks.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright



brigades. They suffered even more severely, however, from the insanitary state of the trenches and billets, which became apparent only when the snow thawed and disclosed the filth which lay beneath. The agitation of the medical authorities over the prospect of grave epidemics was at its height when German armoured formations broke through the 9th French Army near Sedan on May 14 and put a term to the discussion of sanitary ideals. The hygiene experts found themselves suddenly confronted with far more urgent matters.

Thus it came about that when Hitler launched his forces against Holland and Belgium on May 10 the 51st (Highland) Division lay with the French forces on the Saar, 200 miles south-east of the nearest British troops of the rest of the B.E.F. The Division did not therefore take any part in Plan D. It will be remembered that this Plan (*see* Chapter 147) involved the great right-wheel into Belgium from the general line of the Franco-Belgian frontier to the line of the River Dyle, a few miles east of Brussels. The wheel pivoted on the right of the 1st French Army—the left of the 7th French Army being on the outer flank near the sea. The B.E.F. was thus sandwiched between these two French armies.

Hardly had the B.E.F. successfully accomplished the approach march to the line of the Dyle when, on May 14, the German armoured formations crashed their way through the 9th French Army in the region of Sedan and brought about the retreat to Dunkirk of all the French and British forces in the north.

Although the Highland Division was not engulfed in the disasters which befell the British and French forces in Belgium and Northern France, its fate was worse. When the Germans invaded Holland and Belgium all three infantry brigades were in the line, supported by their own artillery and a number of French batteries. The position was held in great depth—the forward and support lines being in front of the Maginot forts, with the reserve line close behind them. From May 10 to 13 the Germans made violent attacks all along the line, and the Highland Division suffered severely. Then the situation in Belgium and Northern France began to deteriorate so rapidly that reinforcements were called for from the Maginot

Line. Accordingly the French division on the right of the Highlanders was taken out of the line, and they themselves took over the vacated front, giving up their forward line to enable this to be done.

About May 20 General Fortune received orders to concentrate his Division in an area between Metz and Verdun, and he established his Headquarters at Etain. Severe fighting was taking place around Rethel, and the Highland Division was kept in its new concentration area until the result of this action was seen. It was here that the French had one of their few definite successes against the Germans, so the Highland Division was allowed to proceed on its journey westwards.

Orders were given for the Division to concentrate with all speed near the coast in the area lying between the Bresle, which flows into the sea at Le Treport, and the Aulne, which runs parallel and enters the sea about Dieppe. The troops travelled partly by road and partly by rail—those by road going through Verdun, the outskirts of Paris, Pontoise, and Gisors. The rail parties moved by a still more southerly route, which took them through Troyes, Orléans, Tours, Le Mans, and Rouen. On arrival in the concentration area Divisional H.Q. was established in the Forêt d'Eu.

Between Bresle and Aulne

In considering the actions of the Highland Division and the Armoured Division in the fighting south of the Somme during May and June, 1940, it will be easier for the reader to follow if each Division is dealt with separately.

In actual fact their movements were seldom coordinated, and it was only for a few days that one composite regiment of the Armoured Division was under the orders of General Fortune, although a much depleted support group was fighting with him for longer.

In the main the actions of the two divisions were independent. Their lines of retreat were also entirely different: the Highland Division (less the 154th Infantry Brigade Group) went down fighting at St. Valery, and the 154th Infantry Brigade Group re-embarked at Le Havre; while the remnants of the Armoured Division re-embarked from ports as far away as Cherbourg and Brest.

Much of the information on which this account is based was gathered from French sources, and where there were two lines on any event it was found that the French and British versions agreed. But without access to official documents or diaries it is impossible to guarantee chronological accuracy. None the less, the writer is satisfied that the narrative will give a true general impression of the doings of those two gallant but hopelessly handicapped formations during the hot summer days of 1940.

While the Highland Division was completing its concentration in the area between the Bresle and Aulne the Germans had occupied bridgeheads on the south bank of the Somme at Abbeville and St. Valery-sur-Somme (not to be confused with St. Valery-en-Caux, south of Dieppe. The Armoured Division had already been heavily engaged with the enemy, and General Fortune was not unnaturally dismayed when its commander, Major-General Roger Evans, told him that all he could assemble for active operations was one composite regiment made up out of the remnants of his division and mostly consisting of light tanks with thin armour and without anti-tank guns. But General Evans also placed under General Fortune's orders the support group (which, however, did not contain any artillery other than anti-tank and anti-aircraft); its one battalion of infantry had been lent by the Officer Commanding at Rouen and was not trained or organized for its role.

In touch with the Germans on the south bank of the Somme there were reported to be three French D.L.M. (Divisions Légères Mécanisées). De Gaulle's armoured division south of Abbeville was one of these.

The Highland Division advanced over the Bresle and took over from these shattered French formations on a frontage of about 20 miles, being supported by a considerable amount of French artillery.

On June 3 General Fortune ordered the 152nd Infantry Brigade to attack the strong enemy positions. The brigade was reinforced by the two regular battalions from the other two brigades—the 1st Black Watch and 1st Gordons. The attack was supported by about 300 guns, including French and the divisional artillery. The first objective was successfully gained by 04.00 hours according to plan, but then a fatal hitch occurred and the promised air observation did not materialize; no observation was therefore possible on the German artillery north of the river. As a result the second objective was not reached, and General Fortune had no option but to call off the attack at 09.00 hours. German dive-bombers were soon on the scene and the Division suffered very heavy casualties.

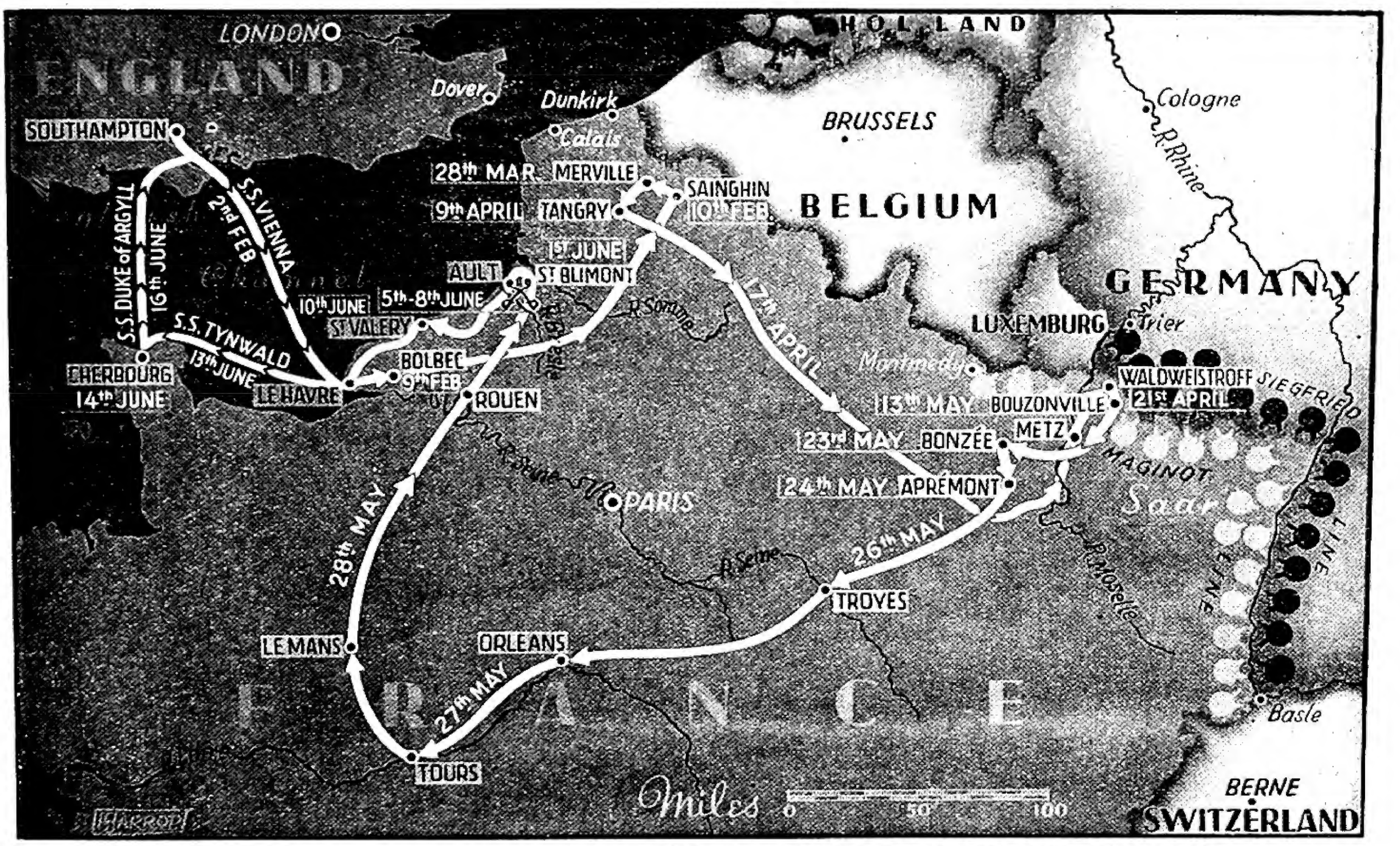
Early on the morning of June 6 the Germans attacked in strength all along the line, and the Highland Division was forced back south of the Bresle. Here it stayed in position for two days, largely with a view to assisting the French on its right to get back—action which was greatly appreciated by the French.

On June 9 withdrawal to the line of the Aulne was ordered, and during the day General Fortune, in consultation with the commander of the French 9th Corps, agreed to withdraw to Havre. Brigadier Stanley-Clarke, commander of the 154th Infantry Brigade, was told to proceed at once to take up a covering position south and east of Havre through which the other troops could withdraw. His force consisted of half the 8th Argylls, about 150 of the 7th Argylls, 4th Black Watch, 6th R.S.F. (a Pioneer battalion), portions of the support group of the Armoured Division and portions of an armoured brigade, three battalions of the 12th Division (which was one of the three sent out for labour duties), 17th and 75th Regiments R.A., two Field Coys. R.E., and portions of the 7th Middlesex Regiment which had been picked up on the Lines of Communication.

During the 10th this group, under Brigadier Stanley-Clarke, retired by the coastal road to Fécamp and joined some scattered French troops in a defensive position stretching from Lillebonne on the Seine to Fécamp—a front of some 20 miles—with a second line closer in to the town of Havre. Half this force embarked on the night of June 11–12 and the other half on the following night for Cherbourg, where they disembarked. On the 15th they re-embarked for Southampton, and thus pass out of this story. The regular battalion belonging to this brigade was attached to the 152nd Infantry Brigade and its remnants suffered capture at St. Valery-en-Caux.

Stanley-Clarke's Force Escapes

Meanwhile, the rest of General Fortune's force continued its retreat towards Havre. On the night of June 11–12 about 1,500 motor vehicles took the coastal road from Dieppe for St. Valery, without lights and in perfect order and complete silence. An advance party had been sent on beyond St. Valery to reconnoitre the road to Havre for the march of the following night. This party now returned to say that the Germans were already astride this road south of St. Valery and that the line of retreat to Havre was cut. Thus it came about that the Division, less Brigadier Stanley-Clarke's group, found itself surrounded. (*See* relief map in page 954.)



ODYSSEY OF THE 51st (HIGHLAND) DIVISION

Showing particularly the wanderings of a portion of the Argylls which, with other units under the command of Brigadier Stanley-Clarke, was got away from Havre on June 13 for Cherbourg and Southampton, this map illustrates in the main the remarkable vicissitudes of the Highland Division: its sojourn in the Saar and its fighting journey back to the coast.

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Harrop*

As the troops arrived between Veules-les-Roses and St. Valery a large semi-circle was formed covering these two places, and French and British troops hastily took up a perimeter defence. Word was passed round that full support from the Navy and the R.A.F. could be expected now that the evacuation of Dunkirk was over. It was generally recognized that the position would have to be held for two or three days before ships could be assembled to evacuate the troops, as had been done a few days earlier at Dunkirk. Later different orders were received, at any rate by some units, to the effect that this wide perimeter of defence was to be given up and that all troops were to assemble in and around the town of St. Valery itself. It is probable that this order was intended to facilitate embarkation.

St. Valery was soon in flames, and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon the Germans tried a strong attack against the town. They gained an entrance, but were ejected in hard hand-to-hand fighting. When night fell the troops were ordered out of the burning town to take up a perimeter defence some distance outside of it. Again and again during the night the Germans attacked, but were everywhere repulsed. Street fighting continued all night in the outskirts of the town, but the Germans were unable to effect any deeper penetration.

In the morning eight ships were seen off the coast at Veules-les-Roses, about six miles east of St. Valery (*see* sketch map in page 957). By this time the troops in St. Valery were short of ammunition, but those that could were allowed to proceed along the beach towards Veules-les-Roses with a view to reaching the ships. The rest, exhausted and practically without ammunition, were gradually forced to surrender after further bitter fighting.

In considering the movements and actions of the 1st Armoured Division it is important to remember that it was never a complete division. First organized in the early summer of 1939, its composition had been drastically revised by the General Staff in the early spring of 1940, and was incomplete in May. When ordered to proceed to France the Division consisted of two armoured brigades (each made up partly of light and partly of cruiser tanks) and a support group which contained no artillery except a few anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, no bridging equipment for armoured fighting vehicles, and no infantry. Its two infantry battalions and one armoured regiment were deflected for the defence of Calais on May 23, before the tail of the Division had left England.

New Light on 1st Armoured Division

When the first flight of armoured vehicles disembarked at Cherbourg on May 20, there was great doubt as to where the Division was to concentrate. Its commander, Major-General Roger Evans, had been to advanced G.H.Q. at Renaix in Belgium and had received orders to concentrate the Division as soon as he could in the Arras-Amiens area. By the time that he had got back to meet the head of his Division at the port of disembarkation, the German Panzer divisions which had broken through the 9th French Army on May 14 had already reached Amiens, and had indeed got some advanced troops as far as Abbeville.

All communications between General Evans at the port of disembarkation and advanced G.H.Q. in Belgium were

cut, and he could only communicate with the Commander-in-Chief by telephone through the War Office—a very lengthy and unsatisfactory method. The situation was developing so rapidly that it was quite obvious his original instructions to assemble in the Arras-Amiens area had now become inoperative. After much telephoning to the War Office, and after a consultation with the G.O.C. Lines of Communication, it was decided to get the first flight ashore and to concentrate around Pacy, some 50 miles west of Paris and south of the Seine. Only one regiment of the leading armoured brigade had concentrated in this area when orders were received from the War Office for the Armoured Division to secure the crossing of the Somme between Amiens and Abbeville, with a view to later employment in any direction under orders which would be issued from G.H.Q. The two other regiments of the leading armoured brigade were at this time in the train between Cherbourg and Pacy.

Advance to the Somme

The advance to the Somme took place as ordered, the tail of the leading brigade being approximately 60 miles behind its head. The head of the other armoured brigade was only just commencing to embark at an English port, and the rear echelons of the Division were on the move to the port of embarkation. On reaching the vicinity of the Somme the leading brigade found all the bridges destroyed and the Germans in strength on the south bank. After the inevitable failure of this operation the Armoured Division was placed under French command, and was ordered to take part in another attack against the Somme farther west, in cooperation with the Second and Fifth D.L.M. For reasons which the writer has been unable to clarify, this combined attack only partly materialized. Units of the two British armoured brigades did attack, however, and suffered very severely in men and in tanks.

It was now May 26, and the Highland Division, as has already been explained, was beginning to arrive in its concentration area between the rivers Bresle and Aulne. The Armoured Division now came under the orders of General Fortune, who was not unnaturally distressed to find that General Evans, as a result of mechanical breakdowns and battle casualties, could put at his disposal only one composite regiment out of the whole Armoured Division. As related earlier, a support group was also put under command of General Fortune for flank protection. Meanwhile, Evans collected what remained of his force in the Louviers area, south of the Seine, for repairs and reorganization.

On June 7 General Weygand arrived at Lyons-la-Forêt, the H.Q. of the 10th French Army, under which General Evans had been operating until the arrival of the Highland Division.

Weygand ordered the Armoured Division (less that portion left with the Highland Division), which then consisted of fewer than 50 tanks, to hold the line of the river Andelle north-east of Rouen against an expected attack by two Panzer divisions numbering possibly 400 tanks. For this immobile role an armoured division was, of course, unsuitable; but the remnants of the British Armoured Division—with no guns, no infantry, and no assistance from the air—were particularly ill-fitted for it.



COMMANDER, 154th INFANTRY BRIGADE

The 154th Brigade of the Highland Division was composed of a Regular Battalion of the Black Watch (1st) and two Territorial Battalions (7th and 8th) of the Argylls. Its commander, seen above, was Brigadier A. C. L. Stanley-Clarke, C.B.E., D.S.O.

Photo, Lafayette

This gallant remnant of the Division carried out the allotted task to the best of its ability, falling back in the face of vastly superior numbers. For a space, however, some relief was afforded by the arrival of the composite armoured regiment which had now been released by the commander of the Highland Division. By the early morning of June 9 the remains of the shattered Armoured Division had been withdrawn, fighting over the Seine across the bridges about Rouen.

Once more the Armoured Division found itself under a new commander, and was temporarily under the orders of the French General responsible for protecting the crossings over the Seine from Paris to the sea. The terribly depleted division fought a series of actions against superior German formations from the line of the Seine back to Cherbourg and Brest, and at these two ports the remnants finally re-embarked.

It is worthy of note that the troops took back with them 25 tanks and some 50 transport vehicles from Cherbourg, and were thus amongst the few British fighting troops in France who succeeded in bringing out of the country an appreciable quantity of their heavy fighting equipment.

HEADQUARTERS, 51st (HIGHLAND) DIVISION

Taken shortly after the arrival of the Division in France during February, 1940, this photo shows the Commander (6) with his officers outside H.Q. near Béthune. 1, Capt. (now Major) J. Scott Elliott, Argylls; 2, Major (now Brigadier) C. M. Barber, Camerons; 3, Capt. D. Lumsden, Black Watch; 4, Lt.-Col. T. H. Hunter, C.R.A.S.C.; 5, Brigadier H. C. H. Eden, C.R.A.; 6, Major-General V. M. Fortune; 7, Lt.-Col. C. N. Roney-Dougal, R.A.; 8, Colonel Robertson, A.D.M.S.; 9, Lt.-Col. H. M. Smail, C.R.E. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*



Chapter 150

THE DESPERATE DEFENCE OF CALAIS, MAY, 1940: FULL STORY OF CALAIS FORCE

Here a day-to-day account is given of the magnificent resistance of Calais Force, incorporating information not available at the time the story in Chapter 89 was written. It is based upon the official narrative 'The Defence of Calais' by Major Eric Linklater and Admiralty and War Office bulletins

WHILE it gives some idea of the desperate fighting that took place in the key port of Calais during four fateful days in May, 1940, Chapter 89 is necessarily incomplete, especially as regards chronological detail. Nearly eighteen months after this memorable action the naval and military authorities released fuller information, which enables an ordered review of the whole situation to be given, as well as further particulars of units engaged.

By the third week in May the communication lines of the British Expeditionary Force retreating westwards from the river Escaut had been cut by the lightning scythe-stroke to the Channel coast of the German armoured divisions. It was essential, therefore, to establish an alternative supply route, and it was for this purpose that the 30th Infantry Brigade was sent to Calais with orders to open up connexions with Dunkirk. Scarcely had Calais Force (as it was called) disembarked when it became obvious that the town was already so closely invested that the realization of this aim was impossible. Instead, an order was given to hold Calais itself: "You will carry out this order," said General Ironside, the C.I.G.S., "in an active not a passive manner. I need not say more." Literal indeed was the interpretation of this instruction by the Force's commander, Brigadier Claude Nicholson.

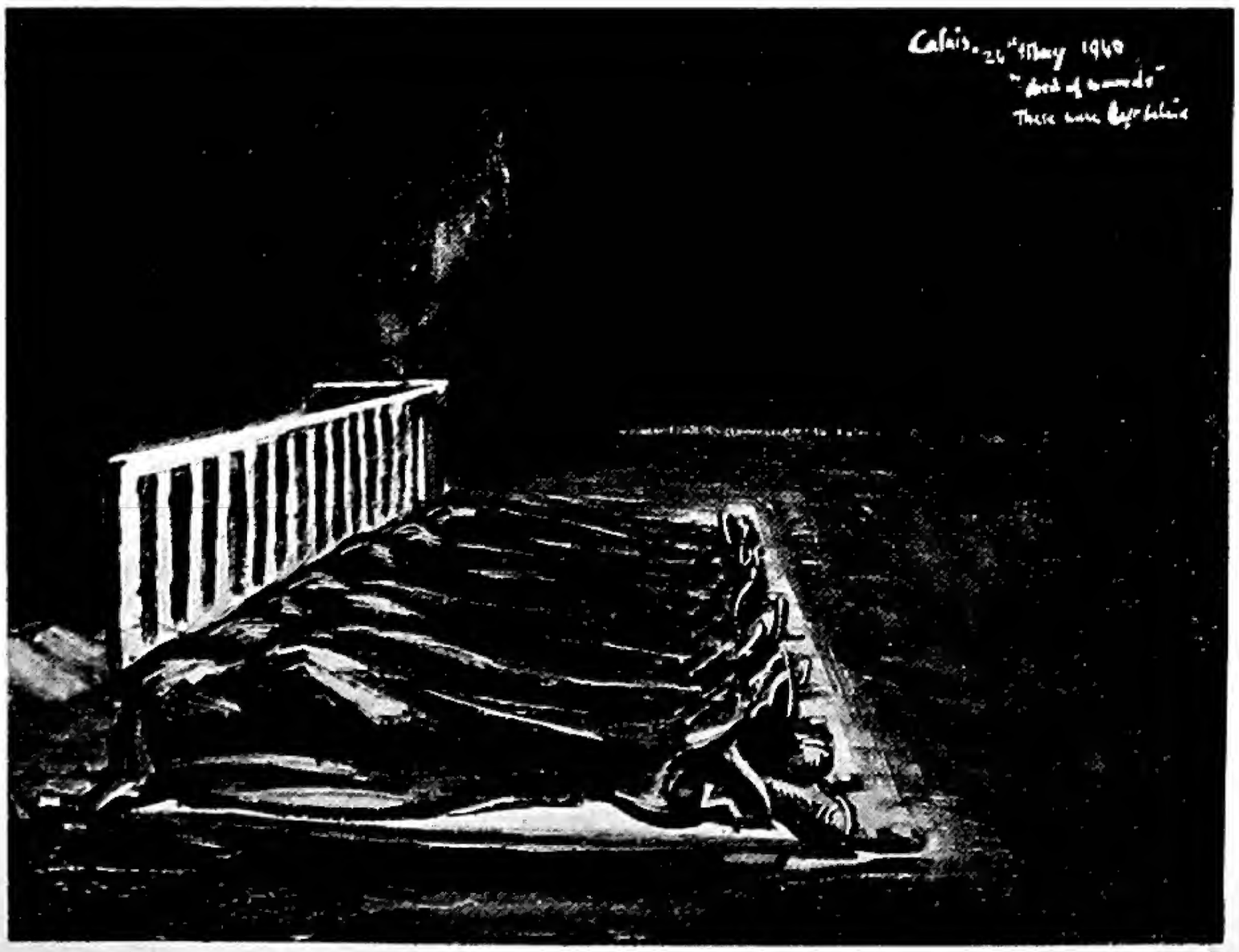
Defenders of Calais

Calais Force consisted of one battalion each of the King's Royal Rifle Corps (60th Rifles), Queen Victoria's Rifles and the Rifle Brigade, with a battalion of the Royal Tank Regiment and an anti-tank battery of the Royal Artillery to complete the Brigade Group—some 3,000 men in all. These troops were augmented at various times by part of a Searchlight Regiment R.A. (which had been in France since March and was sent to take over the A.A. defences of Calais), 125 men of an A.A. Regiment R.A., a detachment of 85 Royal Marines (dispatched direct from England), and a body of 800 French infantrymen.

Historic Calais comprises Calais-Nord, embracing the old town, the docks and the Citadel, and Calais-Sud—the new town—which partially encloses the old (*see* Plan p. 1569). In organizing his defence, Brigadier Nicholson established an Outer Perimeter, which roughly surrounded Calais-Sud, and an Inner Perimeter, which encircled most of Calais-Nord and the Courgain, or fishermen's quarter. The opening phase of the fighting raged round this Outer Perimeter, while the final phase was concentrated on the Inner Perimeter. A day-to-day account of the flow of battle is given below.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22. Early in the afternoon Queen Victoria's Rifles, commanded by Lt.-Col. McCartney, and the Tank Battalion, under Lt.-Col. Keller, arrived in Calais and began to disembark. A company of the former regiment was later sent to Sangatte, its other companies being posted in the outskirts of the town. Meanwhile, the light tanks, cruiser tanks and transport vehicles were unloaded and prepared for action. At such short notice had they left their home station that their guns were still encased in a peaceful coating of mineral jelly, which the crews worked most of the ensuing night to remove.

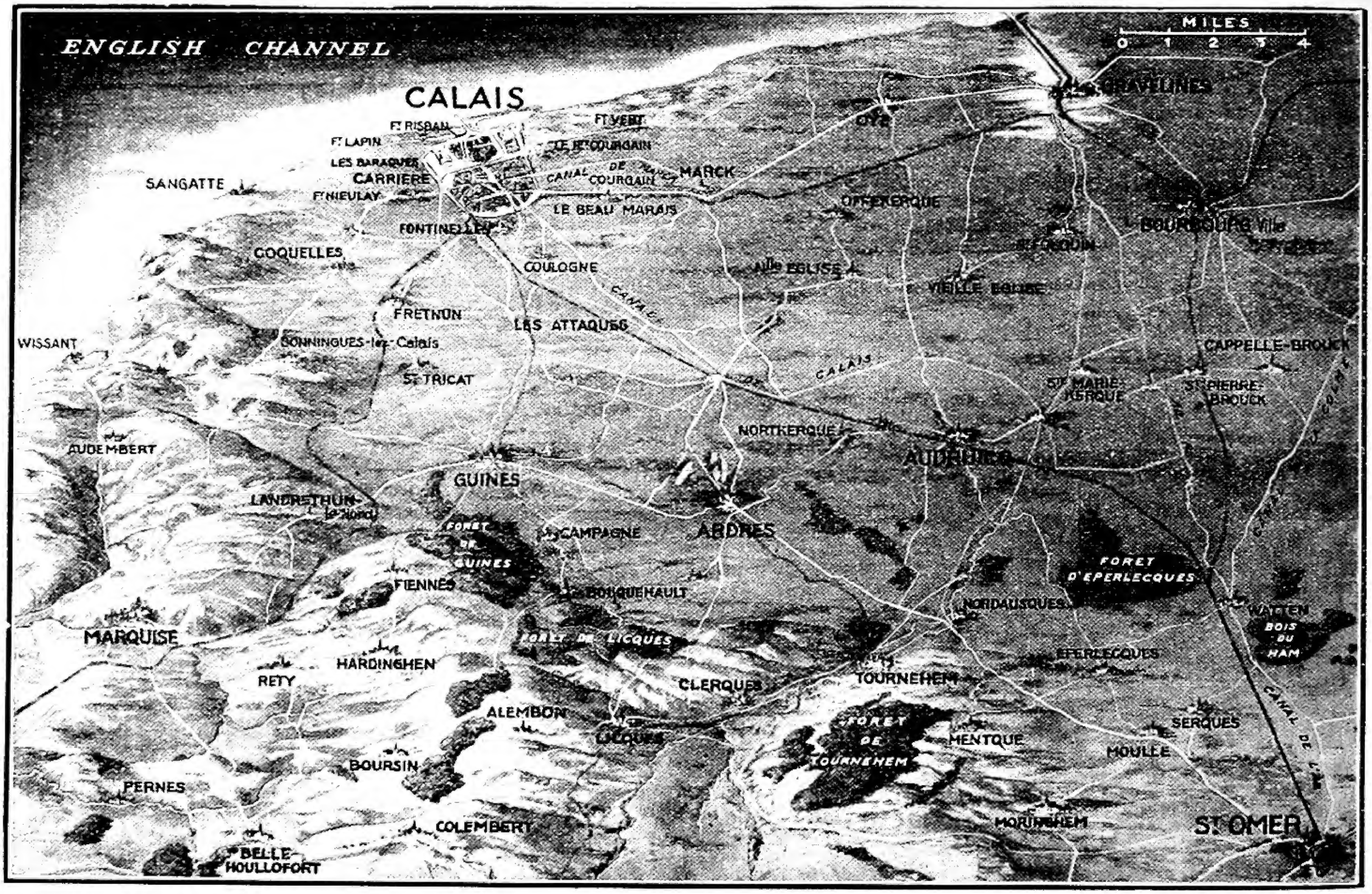
THURSDAY, MAY 23. At dawn reconnaissance patrols of the Q.V.R.s went out in several directions to locate the enemy. In this they succeeded, since they did not come back. Later in the morning Lt.-Col. Keller, with three squadrons of tanks, set out for St. Omer, whither he had been ordered by G.H.Q., but on reaching Guines, about five miles out of Calais, he encountered a German column advancing from Marquise and a short inconclusive engagement took place (*see* Map p. 1566). Eventually the British tanks were



'THESE WERE LEFT BEHIND'

Profoundly moved by the stark tragedy of his last hours at Calais on Sunday, May 26, a stretcher-bearer of the R.A.M.C., Mr. G. Lambourn, was impelled to record this poignant impression. Set down in ordinary enamel paints, it bears a terse superscription that tells the grim story all too well: 'Died of Wounds—These were left behind.'

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SCENE OF TANK OPERATIONS AT CALAIS, MAY 22-24

On Thursday, May 23, an indecisive engagement took place near Guines between three squadrons of British tanks and a German armoured column advancing from Marquise. The British force fell back behind the railway towards Coquelles, whence later was launched the final abortive attempt to open a road to Dunkirk. Calais Force's heroic five-day resistance enabled the French to flood and hold the Gravelines water lines.

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*

driven back towards Coquelles, where, at 8 o'clock that evening, Brigadier Nicholson arrived to organize a desperate effort to open a way to Dunkirk. Patrols sent out to Ardres and Le Beaumarais met with energetic enemy resistance, but it was decided to make a final attempt to break out in force at 2 o'clock next morning. All these tank movements were cruelly hampered by the refugees which thronged all roads into Calais.

During the afternoon the K.R.R.s and the Rifle Brigade landed and assembled on the sand dunes to the north-east of the town, which operation was effected without interference from the enemy. As the Riflemen awaited their next move, the sound of shell-fire spread eastwards along the Outer Perimeter and, as evening drew on, intensified to a steady roll—shells began to fall in the streets of Calais. At dusk the two battalions took up their stations on the Outer Perimeter, the K.R.R.s with their right flank at Fort Risban and the Rifle Brigade with their left flank on the shore north-east of the harbour—the two units making contact in the region of Halte St. Pierre. Here they awaited the coming storm.

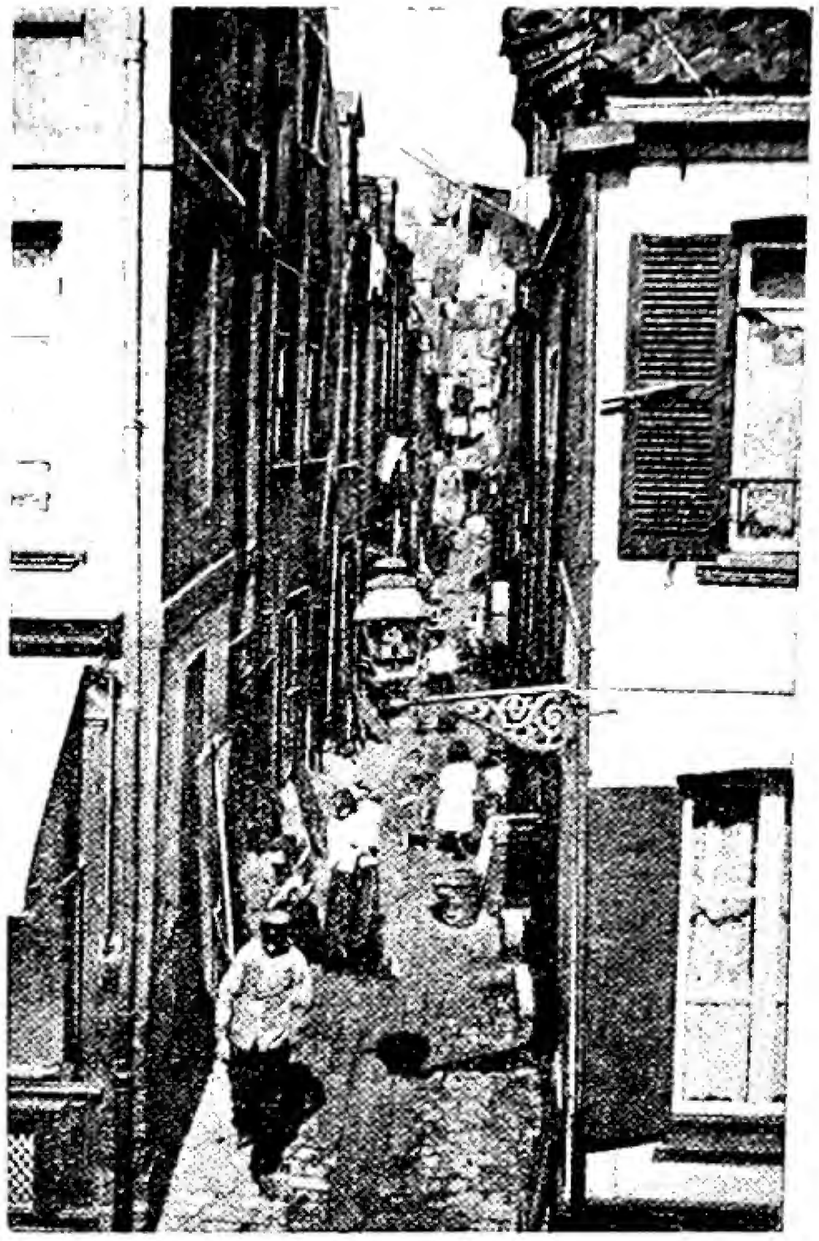
On this day, also, the men from the searchlight batteries, who for days previously had been stationed in the outskirts of Calais, came into the town itself to join the defenders as infantrymen. Regimental H.Q. was the last to retire, and of it their padre wrote: "H.Q., besieged in a farmyard seven miles outside Calais, fought off enemy formations of tanks and infantry with a handful of clerks, batmen, drivers and cooks for a whole day on May 23—and only when the farm was a mass of flames from enemy shelling did they evacuate and march calmly into Calais itself to join up with their batteries and carry on the fight."

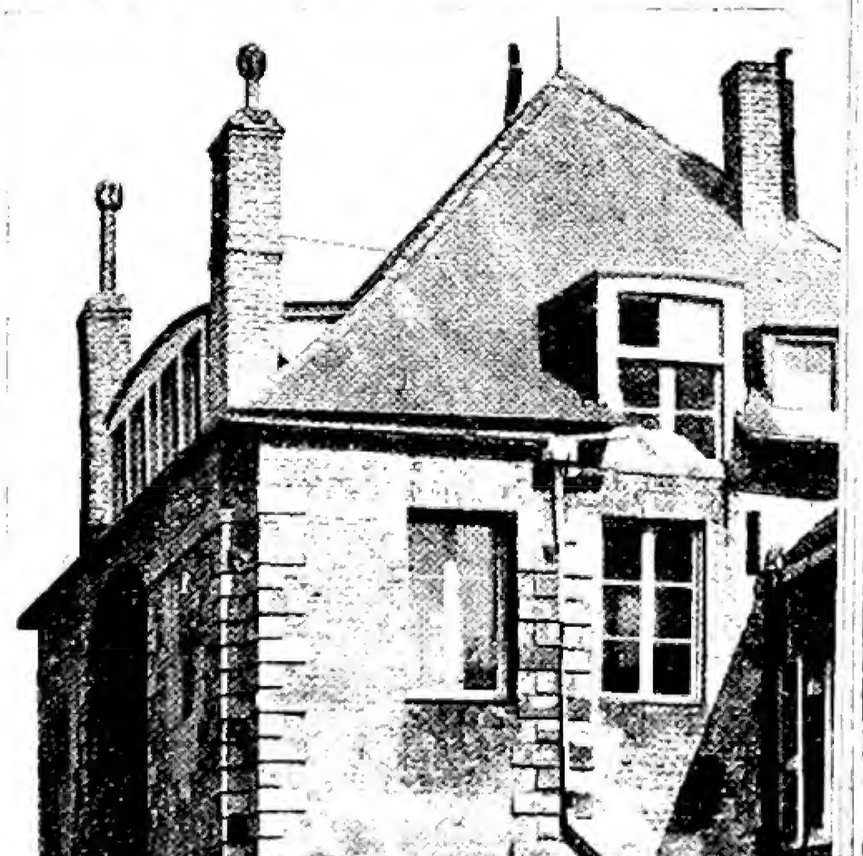
FRIDAY, MAY 24. Around 2 o'clock in the early hours a last determined thrust was made at the enemy positions blocking the road to Dunkirk. Brigadier Nicholson himself accompanied the attacking force, which was composed of one squadron of tanks (the terrain precluding the deployment of a second squadron) with a composite company of the Rifle Brigade on either flank. But the Germans were found in great strength and the British column made no progress. Thus was all hope abandoned of achieving Calais Force's original object—the road to Dunkirk was barred.

Throughout the night and into the morning the bombardment of Calais steadily gathered weight, fires were started and a low cloud of smoke spread slowly over the beleaguered town. The Fifth Column was active and there was sporadic sniping in the streets. Outside, the advancing German armoured divisions were rapidly closing in on the Outer Perimeter, around which fighting became general.

During the morning, indeed, a breach was made in the southern sector, but units of the Tank Battalion, taking instant and vigorous action, flung the intruders out. Shortly after the tanks were again in successful combat, this time at Les Fontinelles, in the west, where one of them in charge of a corporal accounted for eight of the enemy's tanks—a truly notable bag. Fighting during that hot afternoon was





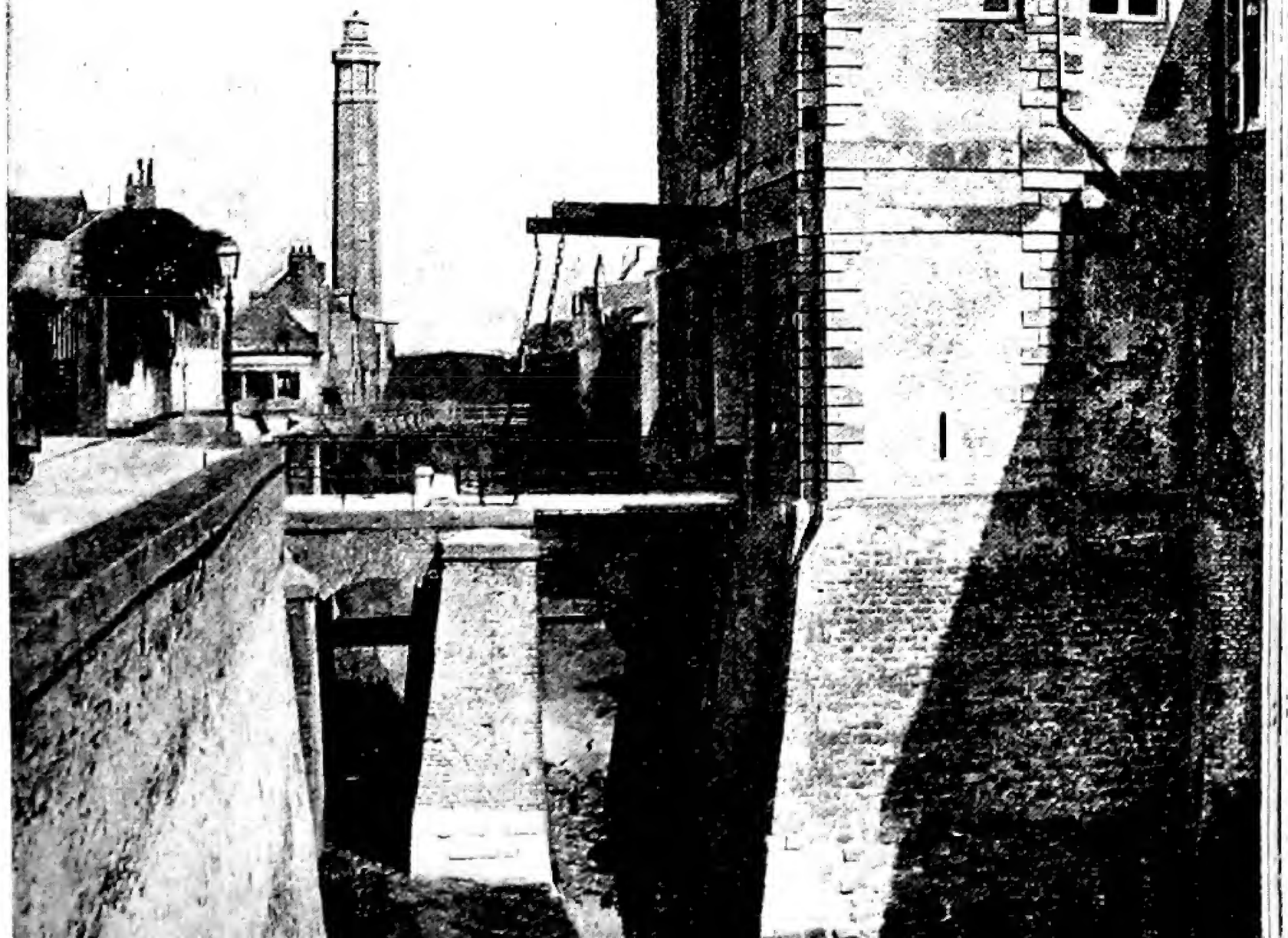


WHERE CALAIS FORCE FOUGHT AND DIED

Above is the Rue de Madrid with the old lighthouse (left) and the Church of Notre Dame (right). From these vantage points, as from the tower of the Hôtel de Ville (below), German Fifth Column agents directed the fire of the enemy's mortars. The Citadel (bottom right) was carried by assault at 5 p.m. on May 26 : thenceforward resistance was confined to the Courgain (top, right).

Photos, A. J. Insall ; E.N.A. 1 Q²





for many of the Riflemen a thirsty business, as the water-mains were early put out of action by the bombardment. Wine, however, was available in a few shops still open, and this the more fortunate troops secured—after inquiring the price and paying for it.

At this time Brigadier Nicholson was still in direct communication with the War Office by radio telephone, and at 2 p.m. he reported from his H.Q. in the Boulevard Léon Gambetta that the situation was grave and stressed the fact that he had no reserves, either of men or S.A. ammunition, with which to repel a German break-through. His anxiety was fully justified. An hour later there was a further onslaught on the western defences, of such violence that Lt.-Col. Miller, whose men of the K.R.R.s were taking the strain, sent word to Brigade H.Q. that his sector of the Outer Perimeter was fast becoming untenable. He was at once reinforced with a platoon of the Rifle Brigade and established a central strongpoint near the Place du Théâtre.

A Grave Situation

But by 6 p.m. the Outer Perimeter was definitely breached at several points, and the enemy, his persistence rewarded, entered the town from the south. So, as the darkness of evening fell on besieged and burning Calais, the Brigadier from new H.Q. at the Gare Maritime ordered withdrawal to the Inner Perimeter; and K.R.R.s, Rifle Brigade and detachments of Q.V.R.s, weary from hours of stubborn resistance, fell back through the smoke-filled streets to a fresh line of defence. To the west of Fort Risban a company of K.R.R.s remained in its position, while eastwards the Rifle Brigade held the Canal de Calais, the Canal de Marck, the old ramparts north of the Porte de Marck and the sand-dunes.

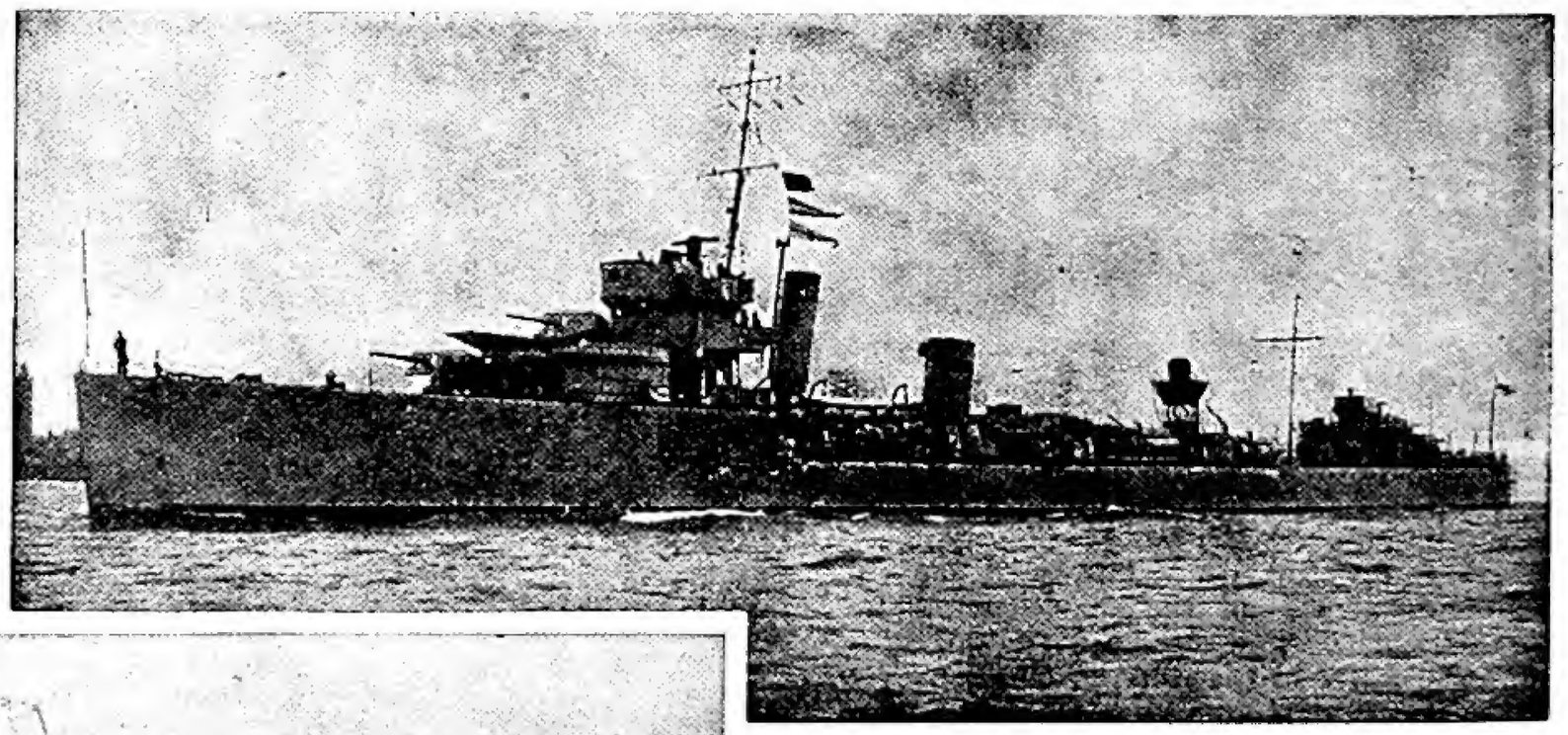
The holding of the Outer Perimeter for so long had to some extent saved the harbour from heavy damage, and from time to time small motor-boats from across the Channel sped in with messages and out again with the wounded. In its efforts to help the defenders, the Royal Navy also made use of the port, and off-shore H.M. destroyers "Vimiera" and "Windsor" maintained an unceasingoffensive patrol, engaging the German field-batteries with great vigour. During the night a fresh supply of ammunition was landed from another destroyer, aboard which was Vice-Admiral J. F. Somerville, who went ashore with a reconnaissance party and made contact with Brigadier Nicholson. (On returning to England, he broadcast an account of this hazardous visit, an extract from which is given in pp. 907 and 908.)

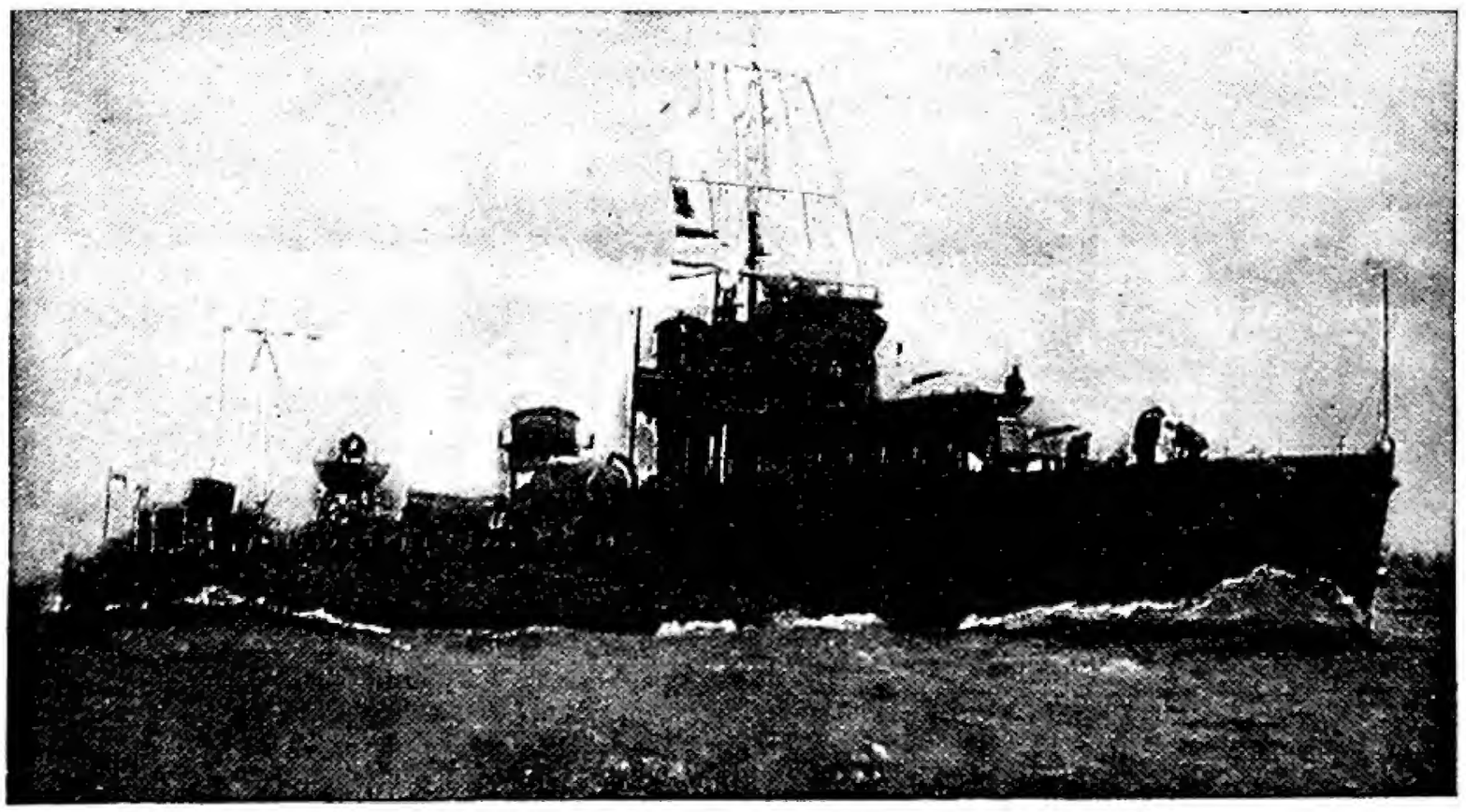
Weary, but cool and collected, the Brigadier emphasized his desperate lack of artillery and ammunition—be had but two light anti-aircraft guns and of his anti-tank guns only a like number was fit for action.

In the course of the night unexpected reinforcements reached the hard-pressed garrison. The first of these was a detachment of 125 men of an anti-aircraft battery of Royal Artillery, the survivors of a regiment who for three arduous weeks had battled their way through from Belgium. Though small in numbers, they were great in fighting spirit and received a ready welcome.

SATURDAY, MAY 25. At 1.15 a.m. battered Calais Force was further supported by a body of 85 Royal Marines, under the command of Captain G. W. A. Courtice. Sent primarily to give cover to a naval demolition party—a task many of them had been performing in Boulogne barely 24 hours previously—this company left Chatham at 6.30 p.m. on Friday evening and were rushed across the Channel in a destroyer, H.M.S. "Verity." They landed with their stores under heavy shell-fire, and before dawn left the harbour in commandeered vehicles with the object of reaching the Citadel. After a nightmare journey through smoke-filled, shell-pocked streets swept by snipers' bullets, they arrived at 7 a.m., and immediately occupied defensive positions. The company's machine-gun section took up station in the upper storey of a barracks and, since there was no sandbagging, mounted their guns on tables pushed against the windows. Despite enemy fire, these ill-protected posts were held until late in the afternoon.

While the Royal Marines were struggling through to the Citadel, two officers of the Rifle Brigade in a Bren-gun carrier carried out a lone reconnaissance of Calais-Sud, the streets of which they found to be almost deserted. It was an ominous calm before the fury to come. As the morning passed into early afternoon the attack increased in

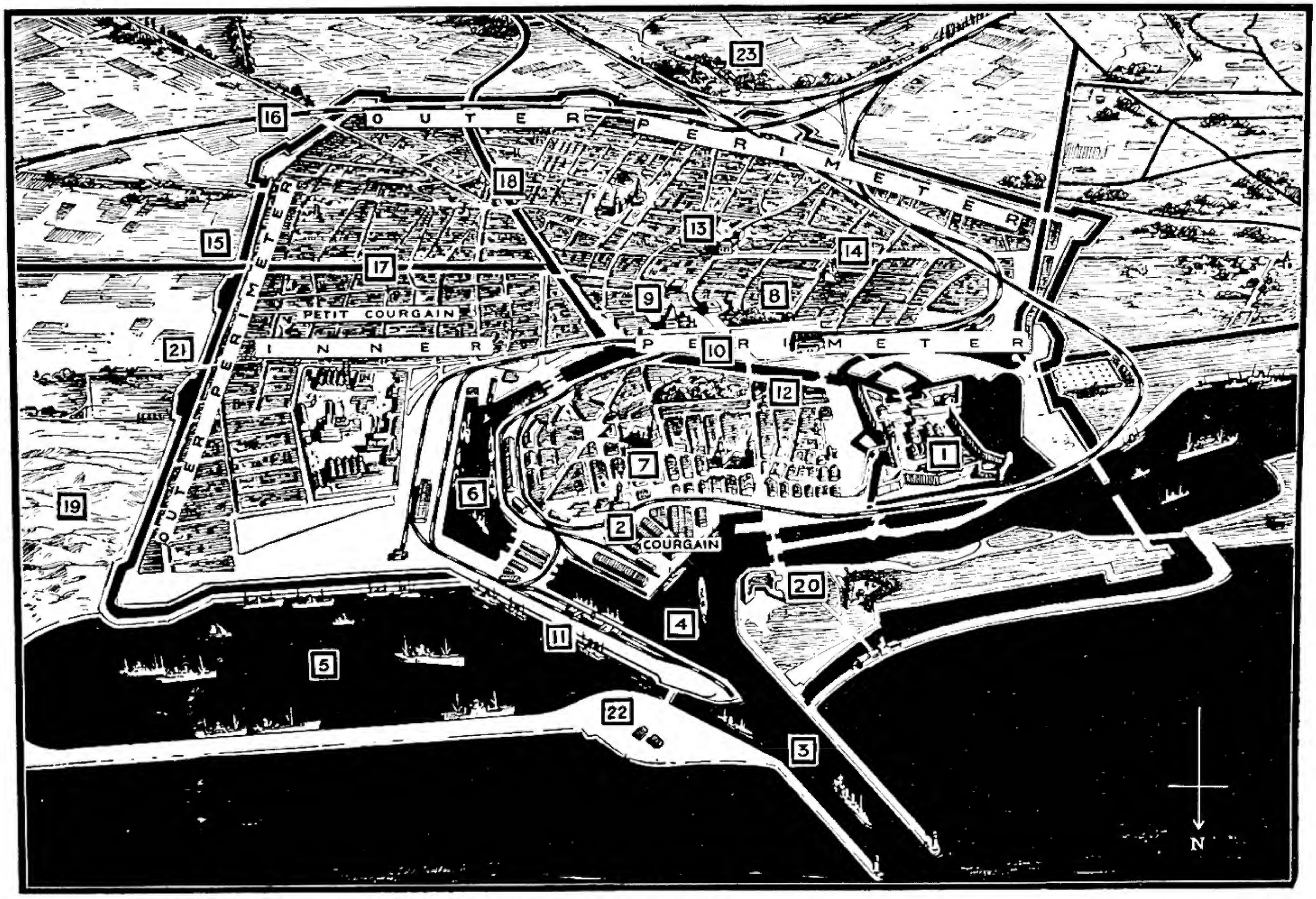




ARTILLERY FOR BRIGADIER NICHOLSON

In his messages to the War Office the Commander of Calais Force asked repeatedly for guns. When these were eventually d spatched it was too late. But the Royal Navy strove manfully to help, and throughout the siege the 4-in. guns of the destroyers 'Windsor' and 'Vimiera' (top) were constantly engaged with the German field-batteries.

Photos, Wright & Logan; Topical Press



HOW THE DEFENCE OF CALAIS WAS PLANNED

In this diagram the siting of the Inner and Outer Perimeters and other key points are clearly shown.

1. The Citadel.
2. Lighthouse.
3. Channel.
4. Avant Port.
5. Bassin des Chasses.
6. Bassin Carnot.
7. Church of Notre Dame.
8. Parc St. Pierre.
9. Hôtel de Ville.
10. Bassin de Batellerie.
11. Gare Maritime.
12. Post Office.
13. Place du Théâtre.
14. Boulevard Léon Gambetta.
15. Porte de Marck.
16. Halte St. Pierre.
17. Canal de Marck.
18. Canal de Calais.
19. Dunes.
20. Fort Risban.
21. Porte de Gravelines.
22. Sea dyke.
23. Les Fontinelles.

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*

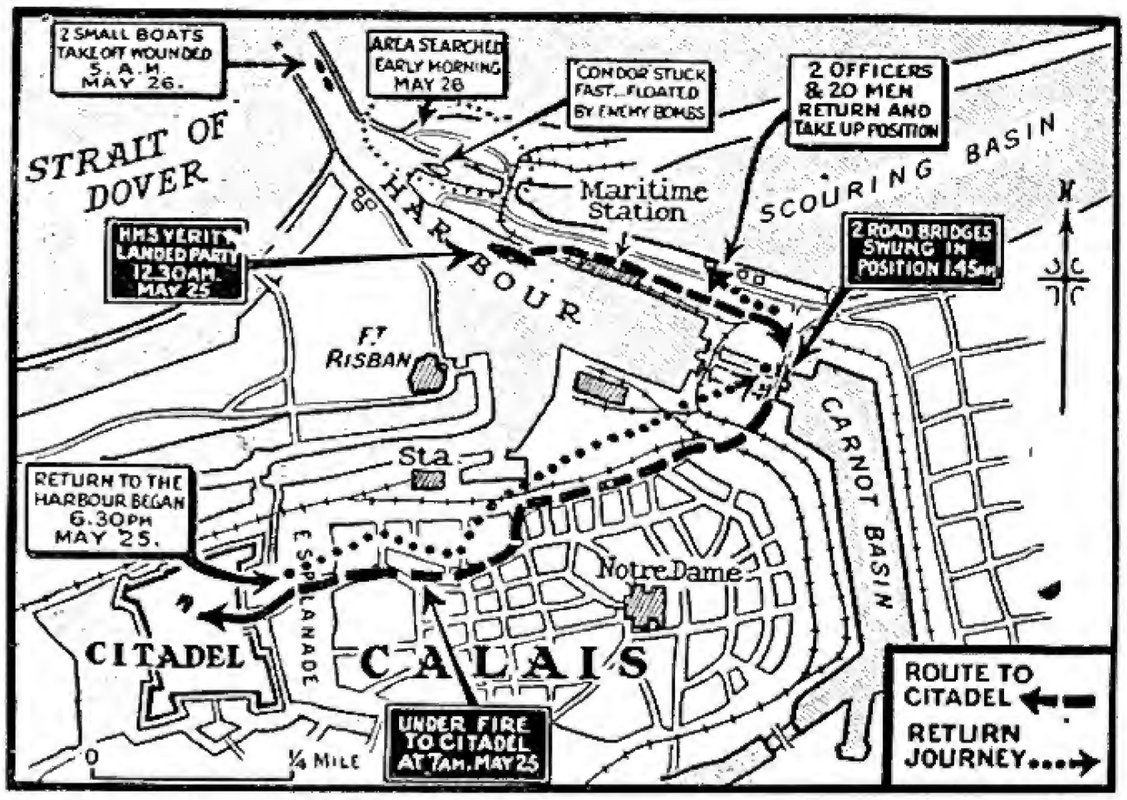
strength, culminating at 3 o'clock in a devastating bombardment which was maintained for three hours. The immediate subjection of Calais had now become of paramount importance to the Germans. The obstinate resistance of the Riflemen and their comrades was thwarting the onward thrust of two full Panzer divisions, and the enemy was determined to crush it once and for all. The assault was pressed with savage vigour; the attacking infantry, supported by tanks, received continual reinforcements of motor-borne troops, while overhead the Luftwaffe hurled destruction through a sooty pall of oil smoke which hovered over the town.

At this time the Inner Perimeter consisted of a series of isolated posts, the continued existence of which was due solely to the magnificent fighting spirit of the Riflemen. Tired almost to exhaustion, many were hungry as well, since systematic issue of rations was impossible in such conditions. One young survivor of the Rifle Brigade said: "During the five terrible days I was in Calais . . . . I had no sleep and only one slice of corned beef and four sweet biscuits." Communication between these nests of resistance was virtually out of the question, largely because of the rapidly growing activity of the German Fifth Column, whose agents had by now established observation posts in such dominating positions as the Lighthouse near the Courgain, the towers of the Church of Notre Dame, and the Hôtel de Ville. The enemy made extensive use of mortars at this stage of the attack, and their fire, directed by these well-placed spotters, was deadly and accurate.

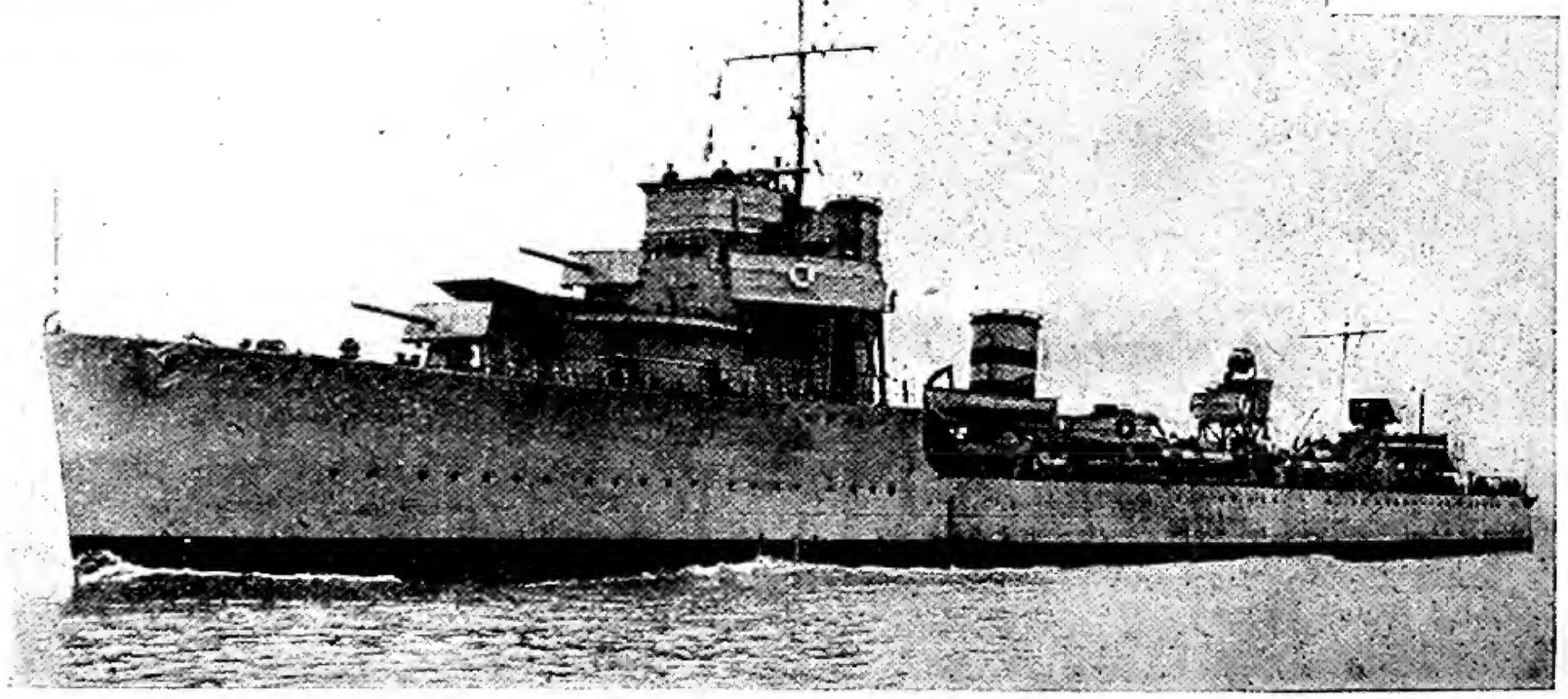
While the afternoon barrage was at full blast, Brigade H.Q. was withdrawn to the 16th-century Citadel, rear H.Q. remaining at the Gare Maritime. From here, at 4.30 p.m., Brigadier Nicholson dispatched his last radio message to London. Once again he begged for guns and asked that air action be taken against the enemy's field-batteries. In point of fact, nine 3.7 howitzers were already on the way to him, but by the time they might have arrived Calais Force no longer had need of them. So the Brigadier's only guns remained those of the indefatigable destroyers "Vimiera" and "Windsor," which continued to seek out the Germans wherever they could find them.

At 4.15 p.m. Capt. Courtice of the Royal Marines withdrew his machine-gun section from its perilous post and sent it forward with one platoon of his men to reinforce the defenders of the Inner Perimeter. The machine-gun section was not seen again. At 5 o'clock the Citadel was swept by a tempest of shells and bombs, and its structure was heavily damaged. Then, at about 6.30 p.m., the bombardment slackened, and Capt. Courtice ordered his remaining men to essay the ¾-mile journey back to the Gare Maritime.









THE ROYAL MARINES FOUGHT AT CALAIS

On the night of May 24-25, 85 Royal Marines under Capt. G. W. A. Courtice (top left) were rushed across the Channel in the destroyer 'Verity' (above). After fighting their way to and sharing in the defence of the Citadel, the survivors withdrew to the harbour (see plan). For his bravery in evacuating wounded on the 'Condor' and other boats, Sergt. Mitchell (right) was awarded the C.G.M.

Photos, G.P.U.; Topical. Plan by courtesy of "The Daily Telegraph"

The Marines set off through a welter of bursting high explosive, flaming buildings and shell-torn streets—inevitably they split up and became separated. Only two officers and twenty men reached the rendezvous, where they joined forces with a detachment of the Rifle Brigade and took up a position along the scouring basin behind the station (*see* plan above).

And so evening descended on Calais Force's third day of ordeal by battle, and still the Germans were held at bay. Though the frenzy of the attack abated with the coming of night, the thinning ranks of the town's defenders could know no rest. Alert and purposeful, amid the sickening stench of burning buildings, they stood to their posts watchful for the final assault.

Half an hour before midnight the Government sent this message to Brigadier Nicholson: "Every hour you continue to exist is of greatest help to B.E.F. Government has therefore decided you must continue to fight. Have greatest possible admiration for your splendid stand." So Calais Force must die that nearly ten divisions might have a chance to live. But the Riflemen knew naught of this exhortation—they fought till the last because of their dauntless courage: it is doubtful even if the Brigadier ever received the message, which was ordered to be sent by boat.

SUNDAY, MAY 26. Shortly after 12 a.m. Capt. Courtice at the Gare Maritime sent out two sergeants to try to locate the men who had gone astray on the journey from the Citadel. One of these, Sergt. Peter Mitchell, came upon several of his comrades taking cover in a tunnel by the harbour mouth and endeavoured to lead them to the rendezvous. Driven back by heavy fire, the party waited in shelter till the morning, but when they eventually got through to the station, they found it deserted. Capt. Courtice and his men had been overwhelmed about 9 a.m. and those who survived had been taken prisoner.

Meanwhile, Calais Force awaited their last agonizing day. The K.R.R.s, though they had lost severely, were still holding the Inner Perimeter from the western ramparts of Fort Risban, outside the west wall of the Citadel and on the north side of the Bassin de Batellerie, to the Bassin Carnot. The line was continued by the Rifle Brigade south of the Bassin Carnot to the Porte de Gravelines and thence northwards along the old ramparts towards the Bassin des Chasses. One company of the Q.V.R.s fell back from a forward position east of Calais to join the Rifle Brigade on the Inner Perimeter, while the company which till Saturday night had held out at Sangatte was forced to retire on Fort Risban.

At 8 o'clock Brigadier Nicholson received a demand for immediate surrender transmitted by a German officer under a flag of truce. The Brigadier was short and to the point. "The answer is No," he said. An hour later the battle was on. In this, their last frantic effort to exterminate Calais Force, the enemy let hell loose upon the already shattered town. Relay by relay, the Luftwaffe's dive-bombers screamed over Calais-Nord, the Citadel and the docks.

From 10 o'clock until some time in the afternoon low-level bombing was continuous, the only opposition a few Bren guns. The destruction was tremendous: new fires were added to those already alight, almost every street was choked with the wreckage of blasted houses, defensive positions were completely obliterated. That men should have survived such an inferno was a wonder, but the Riflemen did.

And so, when the enemy conceived the Ju-87s had shot their bolt, he had to fling in his infantry, tanks and mortars to finish the job.

Since the early morning the Royal Navy had been actively engaged in taking off the wounded in small boats. Each trip into the shell-swept harbour was hazardous in the extreme, but a number accomplished it safely. From one M.T.B. that shot up to the station quayside sprang a naval rating who greeted the injured lying near by with a breezy "Who wants a lift? Our minesweeper is waiting outside, gentlemen!" Among those compelled to take cover in this area was Sergt. Mitchell, of the Royal Marines, with his party, who had sought refuge under the pier. Most of his companions were rescued, but the Sergeant stayed on, unperturbed and cheerful, and collected many wounded from the adjoining piers. At last, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, "under intense machine-gun fire and dive-bombing attacks, he brought many wounded comrades to a pinnace in Calais harbour until he himself could do no more." In these words the London Gazette of Sept. 6, 1940, announced the award of Sergt. Mitchell's Conspicuous Gallantry Medal.

Navy Takes Off Wounded

The remnants of Calais Force were almost at the end of their tether. Ammunition was running tragically low. Using their medium tanks for close street fighting, the Germans were filtering through the Inner Perimeter at all points: machine-gunners were enfilading the streets. By 4 o'clock the last heroic survivors of the Rifle Brigade were overpowered and the harbour area was seized by the enemy. At the Citadel the French defenders were still in action. Since the first day of the siege they had held their positions with great bravery, as had several unattached groups of their countrymen in various parts of the town. But at 5 p.m. the Germans launched a violent infantry assault against them and the Citadel fell at last. Brigadier Nicholson, trapped in the north-west bastion, was made prisoner.

Still Calais Force held out. All who were left of the Riflemen withdrew to the narrow streets of the Courgain, the old fishing town. Here, with stubborn tenacity, they formed yet another, the final, perimeter. With but five rounds of ammunition apiece, and none for their anti-tank rifles, they contrived to hang on until 9 o'clock, when darkness fell. It was a darkness shot with the flaring rockets of the fast-closing-in German infantry, a darkness that was nullified by the light of multitudinous fires. It certainly gave little help to the Riflemen when they were ordered to break up into small groups and attempt to make their way out of the town. Indeed, escape was impossible—the enemy was everywhere.

MONDAY, MAY 27. Dawn found the ruins of Calais silent but for an occasional burst of machine-gun fire. R.A.F. reconnaissance 'planes, flying over the scene of battle, could see no signs of British troops. Calais Force had been wiped out. Not quite, perhaps, for when it was dark naval observers picked out the flashes of an electric torch spelling an S O S. A boat sent to investigate discovered 47 men hiding among the slimy piers of the northern breakwater, and took them away to safety.

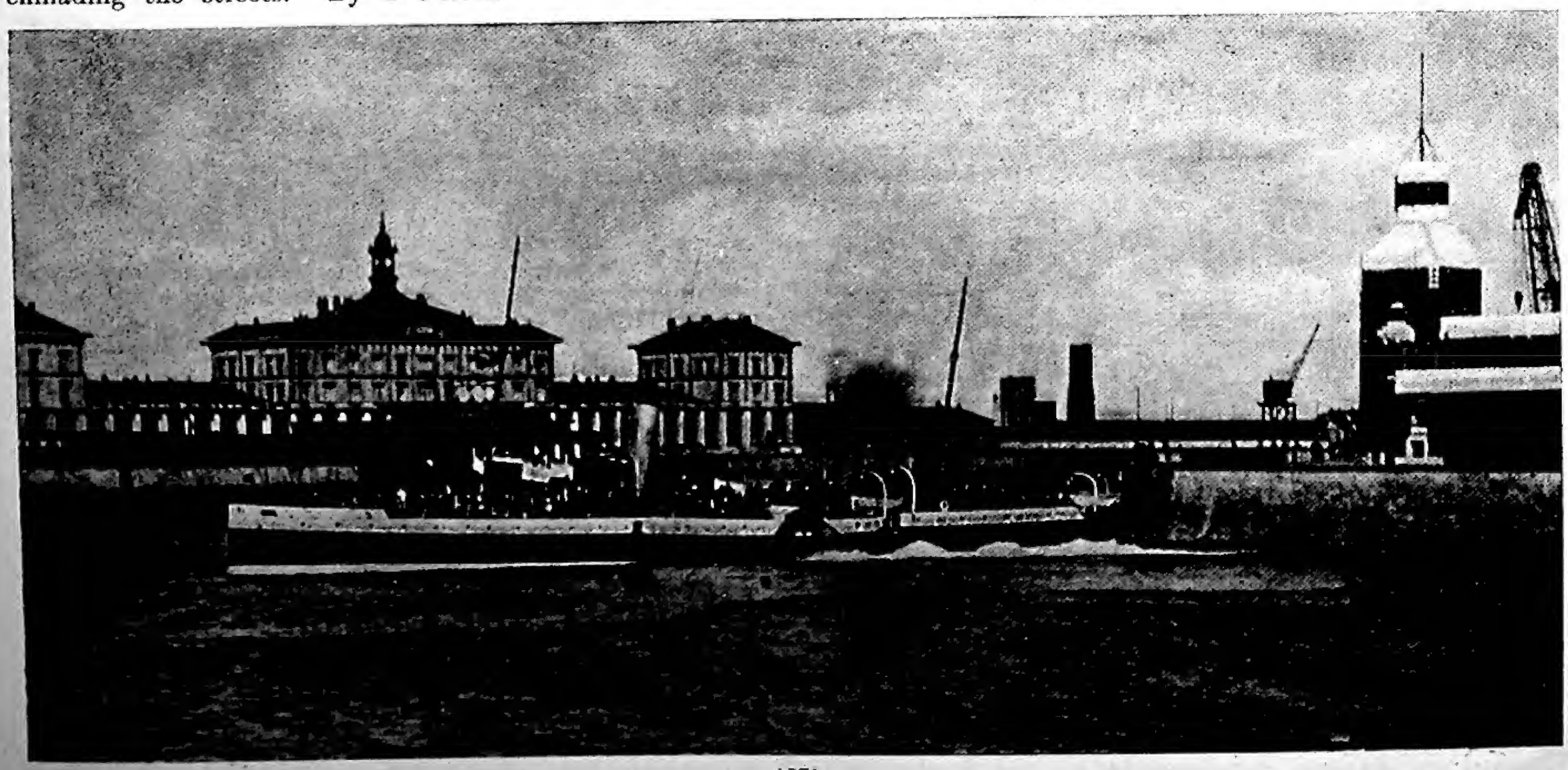
Why was Calais Force so small, so inadequate even to have carried out its original task of establishing a new supply route for the B.E.F.? Why the fatal lack of guns, the shortage of ammunition, the insufficiency of food? Making the fullest allowances for all the man-power, supply and transport difficulties of this particular time, it is yet hard to find satisfactory answers to these obvious questions. Yet Calais Force triumphed in spite of its grave handicaps, in the midst of its defeat. For by its bitter agony a great army was saved.

"Till all their strength was spent and their last round fired the Riflemen fought on. The odds against them were enormous, and they could have no hope of help or victory. But in the foul heat of the burning town they fought with unfailing courage, and by the fury of their death struggle held away from Dunkirk the claw of the German attack" (Eric Linklater).

KEY POINT ON THE BATTLEGROUND OF CALAIS

Increasing enemy pressure on the Outer Perimeter on Friday, May 24, caused Brigadier Nicholson to move his Headquarters from the Boulevard Léon Gambetta to the Gare Maritime, here seen from the south-west. Later, when Brigade H.Q. was finally established in the Citadel, the station was still retained as rear headquarters.

Photo, E.N.A.



Chapter 15

RECORD & REVIEW OF MAIN EVENTS JANUARY TO DECEMBER, 1940

A survey of the first four months of the War is given in Chapter 49, and a similar retrospective account of the first year in Chapter 118. The review here presented covers the year 1940 and epitomizes leading events and tendencies. Authenticated dates and other details (which may differ from those in earlier Chapters) are given throughout

THE dawn of 1940 revealed most of the world, and all Europe, as an armed camp. In Europe alone no fewer than 20,000,000 men had been called from the pursuits of peace to bear arms. Men and materials for giant battles of unprecedented destructiveness opposed one another. All the world awaited the unleashing of Armageddon: and nothing happened.

Fantastic in retrospect are the early months of 1940, when the main problem of Britain's army in France—220,000 men, some six divisions—was their entertainment! Unblooded troops vociferated "We'll Hang out the Washing on the Siegfried Line," and E.N.S.A. seemed more important than the object lesson of a Poland, where 1,250,000 well-armed men were vanquished after fourteen days by Sept. 28, 1939; or of a Finland offering battle to the Giant Russia in the snowy forests and frozen lakes of the Karelian Isthmus.

What Was the Explanation?

IT is to be found in two circumstances. First, the appointment of a French generalissimo to the combined command of the Anglo-French forces; secondly, to the failure of that general to digest the lessons implicit in the German conquest of Poland.

Gamelin had been chief-of-staff to Marshal Foch. Regarded at first as a master military mind, he very soon revealed himself as a commander wedded to the defensive school of strategy and one so timid in action that his trivial little forays into enemy territory about the fringes of the Forest of Wandt resembled more the wrist-smacking exchanges of schoolgirls than the opening moves of a great commander launching a vast campaign.

Logically, in view of her foreign commitments, France had but one military line of action, namely, readiness to take offensive action beyond her frontiers. But Gamelin was rigid-minded and doctrinaire: for the battle-cry of Napoleon's Grand Army, "Advance! Advance!" he substituted the passive concept of war summed up in the slogan: "They Shall Not Pass!"

Of this anaemic conception of modern war—the war of thunderbolts, of lightning strokes in the night, as envisaged by Von Schlieffen, and resting upon the will-to-win—the Germans had, in Poland, already exposed the central fallacy: war cannot be won by waiting in fortifications. But the whole course of the war, and its duration, were conditioned by the worn-out military theory of the French Command—linked behind the battlefield to widespread political corruption. Thus Gamelin and those of like mind were left only with eyes to weep at the triumphs of Von Schlieffen, as Charles XII wept at the exploits of Alexander, and Napoleon at those of Frederick II.

Churchill Warns Britain

THIS false face of calm masked the real features of the European war situation until the end of March, when Mr. Churchill warned the nation that enemy activity, like the small cloud presaging a tornado, had already risen over the eastern rim of the landscape and might strike at any moment.

But the long period of inertia had sapped the people's interest in the war and lulled their initial terrors. "This is a phoney war," men told one another. But the dies irae was at hand. The war was not phoney: it was the grand strategy of the Allies which merited that epithet. On the "home front" production lagged and storms in political tea cups, of which the resignation of the Minister of War, Mr. Hore-Belisha, and the appointment of Mr. Oliver Stanley (January 5) is a typical example, tended to obscure the grim realities across the English Channel.

True Valuation of Russia's Strength

DURING the first quarter of this year a second widely accepted fallacy was exploded, namely, that the inefficiency which had characterized the plans of the U.S.S.R.—actually, they were deliberate makeshifts—extended to her great army. That Russia, foreseeing ultimate attack by Germany, had built up a vast mechanized war machine was known. "But," it was asked, "won't these peasants be likely to put water in tanks intended for petrol?" The opening phase of the Russo-Finnish War tended to confirm this misconception. Russia struck at Finland, November 30, 1939, because the little Republic had declined to sanction concessions to her mighty neighbour like those granted by the other Baltic States (*see* Chapter 19). To extend her frontiers and outworks in the Baltic was, for Russia, as logical as the building of her great army.

Russia faced a terrain of 75,000 lakes and having some three-quarters of the grand total area under forest. The invaders made the same signal omission later made by the Germans in Russia: they sent troops into Arctic conditions without Arctic equipment.

The Finns had prepared a line of defence across the Karelian Isthmus (*see* map pages 460–461) which protected all southern Finland. The Russians, unable to break through here, attempted to turn the defence north of Lake Ladoga. On the East they tried to cut the country in two by a drive at Suomussalmi, on Lake Kianta; and, at another point, north of Salla, to secure the railhead of Kemijaervi. In the Arctic they attacked to secure the port of Petsamo via Murmansk. By mid-February the Finns withdrew from the Mannerheim Line and on March 13 the Russians were in Viipuri (Viborg). The war lasted 105 days, ending March 13, 1940, with the Treaty of Moscow, Finland ceding 16,178 square miles. The lesson of this campaign was that the Soviet Army, initial errors adjusted, revealed itself as the formidable war machine of high efficiency it later showed itself on other battle fronts, an efficiency largely deriving from the firm faith of every soldier that he had something to fight for.

So much for the hard war outline during this period. Half tones include sporadic air raids and leaflet dropping; the first phase of U-boat war; the Brenner meeting of the Dictators, March 18; French political changes (Daladier to Reynaud), March 20; the meeting of the Supreme War Council and declaration of united Allied action, 28th, and the "Altmark" incident (*see* Chapter 63), which was, perhaps, the actual trigger mechanism that precipitated the German invasion of Norway. For the inability of Norway to hinder German use of her territorial waters soon caused the Allies to take further action.

Narvik and the Norwegian Campaign

EARLY in April the matter of the Narvik iron-ore traffic came to a head. Using Norwegian territorial waters enemy vessels laden with iron ore had been making their way to German ports. On April 8 Norway was told that the Allies were laying mines in certain areas along the Norwegian coast (*see* Chapter 78); the object was to compel German ships to come out into open waters.

Evidently a German invasion of Scandinavia had long been planned, for on April 9 German troops landed at Bergen and several other Norwegian ports—in some cases from merchant ships in harbour, where the troops had lain concealed for some days. Simultaneously German warships moved against Oslo, where an ultimatum was presented demanding that Norway should place herself under German military administration. King Haakon and his Ministers fled to Hamar; in Oslo Major Vidkun Quisling, pro-Nazi, set up a puppet government. German troops occupied Denmark almost without resistance on April 9, the Danish Government submitting and King Christian calling upon the people to assume "a completely correct and worthy attitude."

British Troops Land in Norway

ON the day of the Nazi invasion the British Government promised "full aid" to Norway; six days later came news that British troops had landed at several points.

The Germans gathered in strength near Oslo, while the main Norwegian army assembled near Kongsvinger. Soon the defenders were pressed back to the Swedish frontier or forced to retreat towards Elverum. French and British forces landed at Namsos (14th) and Aandalsnes (17th) under a very heavy aerial bombardment from the Luftwaffe: the objective was Trondheim, but this place was already in enemy hands, while strong reinforcements were making their way north from Oslo via the Gudbrandsdal and Osterdal valleys. In the south, Hamar and Elverum were taken by the Germans on April 20; at Lillehammer a Norwegian force tried to check the enemy column advancing up the Gudbrandsdal.

From Namsos the Allied force moved south towards Stenkjer; here on April 23 it was held up by superior German forces,

while at the same time its flank was bombarded by German destroyers in Trondheim fjord. Part of the Allied force from Aandalsnes pushed down the Gudbrandsdal to aid the Norwegians at Lillehammer, but was involved in the Norwegian withdrawal on the 25th. An attempt was made to get to Stoeren, 30 miles south of Trondheim, but by this time enemy columns had occupied both the great valleys, and on the 30th had established connexion between Oslo and Trondheim. Crossing the mountains west of the Glomma, other forces were threatening to overwhelm British troops extended thinly betwen Stoeren and Dombaas.

Failure in Central Norway

THE landings at Namsos and Aandalsnes had been intended as diversions while a combined attack was launched on Trondheim; later it was decided to turn the diversions into a main attack. Owing to the thoroughness of German preparations for the invasion, the Allies were heavily handicapped. The lack of airfields prevented adequate cover being afforded to our landing operations, so that it proved impossible to land artillery and tanks needed for the defence. On the other hand our bases, at small and unsuitable ports, were exposed to continual bombing by enemy aircraft. So it was that on the 28th the British Government decided to withdraw: troops were re-embarked at Namsos and Aandalsnes in the first days of May.

Story of Narvik

ON April 15 British troops had landed at Harstadt, near Narvik. As from April 8 Allied warships laid mines at three points in Norwegian coastal waters, to cause Axis vessels from Narvik to come out into the open. It must have been simultaneously that troopships and warships had left German ports bound for Norway, for on the 8th the "Glowworm," one of our destroyers protecting the minelaying vessels, reported enemy warships in those waters. On the morning of the 9th, near Narvik, H.M.S. "Renown" encountered and damaged the German battleship "Scharnhorst" and the cruiser "Hipper." At night the British Second Destroyer Flotilla, under Capt. B. A. Warburton-Lee, steamed up West Fjord to Narvik and destroyed or crippled five German destroyers. Three out of the five British destroyers taking part in the action were sunk, and the commander lost his life. (*See* Chapter 80.)

On April 11 British aircraft sank the enemy cruiser "Koenigsberg" near Bergen; units of the Royal Navy and naval aircraft went into the Kattegat and sank enemy troopships. The German battleship "Admiral Scheer" was hit with a torpedo and the heavy cruiser "Karlsruhe" was sunk by our submarines. The Second Destroyer Flotilla had been reinforced and had remained near by in Ofot Fjord. On the 13th, headed by the battleship "Warspite" and now under the command of Vice-Admiral W. J. Whitworth, the Flotilla renewed the attack on the enemy warships in Narvik Bay. Seven German destroyers were sunk.

Epic of Lesjeskogen

IN covering the Namsos embarkation H.M. destroyer "Afridi" was lost (*see* Chapter 81). Allied troops at Narvik pressed on with their attacks and the town was captured from the Germans on May 28; within a fortnight, owing to the serious turn of the battle in Flanders and France, Allied forces were withdrawn from Narvik and the luckless Norwegian campaign thus brought to a close. King Haakon and Crown Prince Olaf took refuge in Britain.

R.A.F. aircraft did magnificent work in Norway. Off Bergen they bombed two enemy cruisers (April 9). Attacks were made on Stavanger aerodrome; on enemy warships in Kristiansund Fjord, and on supply ships in the Kattegat. Fleet Air Arm and Coastal Command 'planes raided enemy shipping and bombed airfields used by the Germans. A gallant attempt was made to afford fighter support to our troops; Gloster Gladiators were transported by sea to Lesjeskogen, 40 m. S.E. of Aandalsnes, and an airfield was contrived from the frozen surface of a lake. But the enemy ceaselessly bombed the position and one by one our Gladiators were destroyed until by the morning of the third day a single machine remained. The attempt had failed, and our surviving personnel were withdrawn.

Invasion of Holland and Belgium

HAVING secured her flank by overrunning Norway and Denmark, Germany now set in motion her armies for the campaign in the west. The way had been prepared by a plentiful leaven of pro-Nazi fifth-columnists or of quislings. Subversive action in quarters high and low had made ready for a lightning onslaught.

Holland, Luxemburg and Belgium were invaded in the early hours of May 10 (Chapter 83). About 4 a.m. the Dutch aerodromes of Waalhaven, Bergen, Schiphol and De Kooy were bombed, and The Hague, Rotterdam and other cities suffered a similar onslaught. At 6 a.m. the German Minister to The Hague announced to the Dutch Government that German armed forces were advancing on Holland to prevent an impending invasion by the Allies designed to carry out a thrust at the Ruhr basin. He called on the Government to cease resistance, to which demand the Netherlands Government answered that a state of war had now arisen with Germany.

Parachute Troops Appear

PARACHUTE troops in large numbers were dropped around The Hague and terrorized the countryside. Other airborne troops landed from floatplanes that came down on canals, rivers, docks, etc., near Rotterdam and other Dutch cities, and from aerial troop transports which descended on open spaces at strategic points. Many Dutch airfields early fell into enemy hands, and a great number of aircraft were destroyed.

Air attacks on the seat of Government and on Rotterdam, combined with the activities of thousands of parachutists, had paralysed the Dutch High Command, whose defence plans were frustrated. Two main bridges over the Meuse, and later the vital Moerdijk bridges over the Hollandsch Diep, fell unharmed into enemy hands. Pro-Nazi partisans aided enemy parachutists. Persistent attempts had been made on the 10th to bomb the Royal Family, and the Royal Palace at The Hague was surrounded by parachutists. On the 13th the Queen left for England in a British warship, followed later by members of the Dutch Government.

Mass Murder at Rotterdam

AT The Hague the invaders were eventually rounded up, but at Rotterdam the struggle was fiercer and continued for days. On May 13 strong German motorized forces joined the airborne troops which were attacking the city. On May 14, soon after 1 p.m., the Germans, unresisted, bombed the central part of the city for half an hour, laying waste two square miles and killing about 30,000 people. Earlier that day an enemy ultimatum had been presented calling for the surrender of the city; the time limit had been extended, but 2½ hours before this extension expired the hail of bombs fell.

In the north the Dutch army fell back on the night of May 10–11 to the Zuider Zee dyke, where naval units aided the defenders. Advancing across the entire frontier the Germans occupied Groningen and Friesland on the 12th, and reached the Zuider Zee. Farther south they crossed the Maas and Yssel. The Grebbe Line was taken on May 13, in the absence of any effective aerial aid. The Dutch air force had been wiped out by the initial surprise bombing and by subsequent combats.

On the New Water Line, eastern front of Fortress Holland, a stand was made until May 14, when the enemy broke through. Further resistance became impossible.

In the south the Peel-Raam position had had to be relinquished on the 10th, and Dutch troops retreated westward to join up with French forces which had come to the aid of Holland. On the 14th the line of defence had been withdrawn to Bergen op Zoom-Roozendaal-Turnhout, whence it ran to Mechlin (Malines) and Louvain.

Winkelman Capitulates

A GERMAN armoured division reached the Moerdijk bridges by way of Bois le Duc and Langstraat on the 13th, and next day captured Dordrecht; some of its formations pushed on to Rotterdam. Faced with the threatened destruction of more Dutch cities by murderous air bombing, and realizing the hopeless nature of the struggle, the Dutch Commander-in-Chief decided to lay down arms. At 8 p.m. on May 14 Gen. Winkelman broadcast an order for fighting to cease. This did not affect the Netherlands Navy or the army in Zeeland. A capitulation was signed at 11 a.m. on the 15th. The Dutch army in North Brabant, after resistance to the utmost, fell back and, together with French troops, continued the struggle in Zeeland for some days. (*See* Chapter 144 for a later review of the Netherlands Campaign.)

Rape of Belgium

IN Belgium, as in Holland, concern for strict neutrality had prevented the concerting of joint plans to resist aggression. Soon after 5 a.m. on May 10 (*see* Chapter 84) German aircraft bombed Brussels. At 8.30 a.m. the German Ambassador enacted the farce of presenting a declaration like that of his colleague at The Hague a few hours earlier. The answer was that Belgium would defend herself. Belgian plans envisaged a delaying action along the line of the Albert Canal and the Meuse for about three days, while British and French troops manned the Antwerp-Namur-Givet line.

At 4 a.m. many Belgian aerodromes had been bombed and half the aircraft destroyed on the ground. Early that morning German troops advancing through Dutch Limburg and by way of Maastricht had gained a footing across the Albert Canal, and Eben Emael fort had been seized by airborne troops. The Maastricht bridges in Dutch territory were blown up by the defenders, but two out of the three bridges on the Albert Canal in front of Maastricht, in Belgian territory, fell into German hands undemolished. Over these, during that day and the next, poured an unending stream of German armoured and mechanized forces, thrusting rapidly into Belgium. (On the 12th a very gallant attack by the R.A.F. wrecked the bridges for a time.) On May 10, answering Belgium's

appeal, Gamelin had sent troops to reinforce the line of the Meuse and Albert Canal. The French 7th Army advanced into Holland to defend the Scheldt estuary and Zeeland; cavalry of the French 1st Army reached the Wavre-Namur line; light troops of the 9th Army reached the Ourthe.

On the night of May 11–12 the line of the Albert Canal was abandoned and the Belgians withdrew to the main defensive positions on the Antwerp-Namur line. After a conference between Belgian, Dutch, French and British commanders on the 12th, joint plans were formulated; the Belgians took over the sector Antwerp-Louvain; three British divisions were stationed on the sector Louvain-Wavre, and six others were echeloned in depth between the Dyle and the Scheldt; the 1st French Army continued the line by Wavre and Gembloux to Namur (held by Belgians); the 9th French Army took over the line from Namur to Mézi res, and on its right was the French 2nd Army.

Germans Break Through

On the 13th German columns that had advanced through the Ardennes struck at the French 9th Army and breached its line near Houx; others attacked the French 2nd Army and took Sedan. As a result of further onslaughts by armoured columns the 9th Army broke up. The Antwerp-Namur line thus being turned, the Allies retreated to the line of the Escaut. Namur forts held out for some days, as did those of Li ge (except, of course, Eben Emael). The Belgian Army withdrew in stages to Ghent and Termonde, where for three days a stand was made. Fierce fighting took place around Louvain, captured by the enemy on the 15th and later retaken by British troops; on the 17th it was in German hands, together with Malines and Brussels. The Belgian Government left for Ostend on the night of May 16–17.

German strategy had thus drawn away the French and British from their former strong positions on and behind the French frontiers and, at a critical moment, was driving a wedge between the Allied armies in Belgium and the main Allied armies in France. Thus there developed a grave situation never to be remedied. Late on May 15 the French C.-in-C. ordered the Armies in Belgium to withdraw to the frontiers, but this command reached them too late.

Conquer or Die

On May 17 Gamelin, in an Order of the Day, exhorted the troops to "Conquer or Die." On the 18th Reynaud reorganized the French Cabinet, bringing in the aged Marshal Pétain as Vice-Premier; next day Gamelin was superseded by Weygand. May 20 saw the Germans at the Chemin des Dames and the line of the Oise-Aisne Canal. Amiens was seized and part of Arras, while some units even reached Abbeville at the mouth of the Somme; soon the latter formations were reinforced and thrust on through Montreuil and Etaples to Boulogne. This port, held by French and British troops, was occupied by the enemy on the 24th, after the British Guards had been taken off, under War Office orders, by the Royal Navy. Calais fell on the 27th (Chapter 150).

What the B.E.F. Were Doing

An account must now be given of the British forces under Lord Gort (*see* Chapters 84–88; also 147–148). British H.Q. were at Arras where, in the early morning of May 10, enemy aircraft dropped bombs. At 5.30 a.m. General Georges, under whose direction the B.E.F. was to work, ordered Plan D to be put into operation. This meant an advance into Belgium and the taking up position on the line of the River Dyle. The movement was completed on the 12th; the dispositions of the Armies are given earlier.

As a result of the Allied conference at Casteau on May 12 General Billotte was given the task of coordinating the French, British and Belgian armies. The situation was becoming grave. The fighter group of the Air Component of the B.E.F. had already suffered heavily in action and was reduced to fifty machines; in three days the R.A.F. had destroyed 101 enemy aircraft for a loss of 78 of its own. Three squadrons of British fighters arrived on May 13, but were given to the Advanced Air Striking Force for use on the French front. Gort visited King Leopold at Brussels and urged the strengthening of the Belgians on the left of the B.E.F.

Back to the Escaut

Upon the Dutch capitulation the French 7th Army drew back to Antwerp, while several of its divisions (May 15–18) went south to the aid of the French 9th Army, now retreating before the Panzer columns. The French 1st Army, on the British right, had suffered severely and had given ground. In view of the German break-through the Dyle line was becoming untenable; Billotte ordered withdrawal to the Escaut, sixty miles to the rear. This move was completed during May 16–19.

During all this time the R.A.F. had been harassing the German advance, destroying bridges over the Meuse (Corap's French 9th Army had failed to fulfil this vital duty), and, in cooperation with the French, bombing roads, rail junctions, etc. But the bulge in the Allied line was widening and the enemy on the 17th were at Avesnes and Vervins, attacking with very large tank forces. Next day (May 18) a thrust westward was noticeable, with heavy pressure at Guise and Landrecies; the enemy crossed the Sambre. Antwerp had been abandoned, though the Belgians were fighting back.

Germans Reach the Aisne

On May 19 the Germans claimed to have taken Le Cateau and St. Quentin, while they had reached the Aisne near Rethel. Next day they were at Laon, and the day after they claimed Arras and Amiens. It was not till the 19th that Lord Gort learned from General Billotte of the extent of the disaster on the Meuse.

Joining forces, enemy columns swept across France towards the coast, opening a corridor between the Allied armies in Belgium and the main forces south of the Somme. As a result the Air Component of the B.E.F. withdrew to Britain. The Advanced Air Striking Force moved its H.Q. from Rheims to Central France.

The line held by the B.E.F. on the 19th ran along the Escaut, facing eastward; south it was continued by a force holding the Scarpe crossings, and still more to the south was another force along the Canal du Nord. Southward the Allied line went only to Péronne. Guarding the exposed right flank was yet another emergency force including the garrison of Arras. The French 1st Army fell back in the direction of Douai and Cambrai, and on the night of the 19th took up position on the Escaut; at Bouchain, however, the line turned westward along the Sensée. Gort therefore sent some of his troops to hold the canal line N.W. from Douai to La Bassee. Our force holding the Canal du Nord was withdrawn to the Scarpe east of Arras. By these dispositions Lord Gort had established a defensive flank to his south.

British Counter-Offensive

On May 20 General Dill, C.I.G.S., brought to Gort instructions from the British Cabinet to "move southward upon Amiens . . . and to take station upon the left of the French Army." Instead of this operation a modified plan was agreed upon, an attack in the direction of Arras, for which the support of two French divisions was promised; but the French were not ready, and the British attack was made without them on the 21st. (A French light mechanized formation cooperated.) After reaching the first day's objectives, the British troops were withdrawn south of Lille under threat of outflanking.

The French 9th Army was able to offer little further resistance to the Panzer divisions, and by May 20 the enemy had reached the Chemin des Dames. With the taking of Abbeville, on the 21st, the railway line connecting the B.E.F. with its supply bases was cut; two days later the B.E.F. had to go on half-rations.

After consultation between the Allied commanders on May 21 it was agreed to withdraw from the Escaut. The Allied line would therefore run from Maulde N. to Halluin, and thence along the Lys to Courtrai and Ghent; it was understood that if the Belgians were hard pressed they would fall back upon the Yser.

Weygand's Abortive Plan

Weygand, who on the 20th had replaced Gamelin as C.-in-C., had prepared a plan for a big counter-offensive north and south of the corridor, to close the gap, but this project was based on the false assumption that the French held the line of the Somme and had retaken Péronne, Albert and Amiens. Gort prepared to carry out his part of the operation but needed reliefs and could not be ready until May 26. Before then events on other sectors of the Allied front had made the counter-attack impossible to execute.

By May 22 Calais and Boulogne were invested by the enemy (*see* Chapters 89, 150) and the sole remaining port for supplies was Dunkirk. The area occupied on May 24 by the British forces consisted of a rough triangle with its base on the coast between Gravelines and Zeebrugge and its apex near Douai. The southern face (Douai-Gravelines) comprised the Canal line through Bethune, Aire, St. Omer and along the Aa to the sea; the eastward side comprised the former Escaut line; four British divisions held the sector along the frontier to Halluin, whence Belgian forces continued it north-eastward towards Ghent,

Up till now the brunt of the enemy assault had been felt on the Douai-Gravelines front, but on the 25th the Southern (Canal) front and the Belgian line were heavily attacked. In consequence the British line was extended N. towards Ypres.

It was clear that the Weygand Plan could not be carried out, and the idea of a counter-offensive was dropped. Under tremendous enemy pressure the Belgians were giving ground. Next morning (May 26) it was decided to withdraw behind the Lys, and then a three-day plan was agreed for shortening the defence perimeter by some 50–60 miles. On the 26th, also, Lord Gort was given the discretion, if faced with a situation in which the safety of the B.E.F. would predominate, to fight a way back to the



BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY AND C.I.G.S. VISIT ATHENS

On March 2, 1941, while German columns were crossing the Danube into Bulgaria, Mr. Anthony Eden and Sir John Dill arrived at the Greek capital from Ankara for a conference with political and military leaders. In an interlude of their grave official business they visited the Acropolis, and are seen leaving that scene of ancient splendour.

Photo, Keystone





BENGHAZI, CAPITAL OF THE LIBYAN PROVINCE OF CYRENAICA

With the surrender of Benghazi on the evening of February 6, 1941, almost the whole of Cyrenaica came into British hands. From Tobruk, by a forced march across the desert, covering 150 miles in 30 hours, British armoured forces reached Soluk, south of Benghazi, and cut off Italian troops withdrawing westwards. Simultaneously Australian troops drove along on the coastal road towards the capital.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright



British Official: Crown Copyright

TOBRUK AFTER ITS CAPTURE BY AUSTRALIANS ON JANUARY 22, 1941

Fresh from the taking of Bardia the Army of the Nile drove on along the coast to the important stronghold of Tobruk, destined to be a British spearpoint in later Libyan operations despite the fluctuating fortunes of the campaign. Tobruk was ringed around on January 6 ; after a tremendous bombardment on the night of the 20th, our infantry and tanks next morning went in for the decisive assault. The town surrendered on January 22 at 10.15 a.m. ; here are seen some of the enemy transport vehicles captured ; in the background are clouds of smoke from burning oil.

coast for re-embarkation of as many of the troops as could be saved. On the evening of the 27th Gort learned of the Belgian request for an armistice; as he states in his Despatches, he found himself "faced with an open gap of twenty miles between Ypres and the sea."

Critical Situation on Belgian Front

THE Belgians had conformed to the British withdrawal on May 21 to the line of the Lys; the surrender of Walcheren Island by the Dutch defenders on the 19th had opened a grave threat from that direction. On the 24th the enemy crossed the Lys at Courtrai and a big battle began. A mass air attack was delivered on the entire Belgian sector; with fresh troops the Germans struck from Menin to Ypres and tried to separate the Belgian and British forces, but were held on a line from Ypres to Roulers. None the less, the Belgian situation was critical. On the night of May 25–26 an anti-tank barrier was improvised from railway wagons placed end to end on the line between Ypres and Roulers. At several points the front was giving way; the last reserves were thrown in.

A Doomed Army

BY May 25 all hope of saving the Belgian Army had disappeared, but its soldiers fought on for another two days. The Allies were surrounded, with only the perilous way to the sea open, and this avenue hour by hour growing narrower. At dawn King Leopold sent a message to London describing the dangers of his Army's position, but the accidental death of General Billotte on the 21st and the consequent breakdown of communications prevented such a message being forwarded to the French High Command. Next day the Belgian Command handed to the French Mission a note stating that the Army had nearly reached the limits of its endurance: the enemy was then attacking from Eecloo to Menin. In the evening, General Blanchard, who came to replace Billotte as coordinator of the Allied Armies, told the King the British were withdrawing to the rear on the Lille-Ypres line and were evacuating the frontier position on the Belgian right. That evening the King moved his G.H.Q. to Middelkerke, on the coast near Ostend.

King Leopold Capitulates

ON the 27th the enemy penetrated the Belgian front near Maldeghem, Ursel, Thielt, and Roulers. A five-mile gap was breached and the way was left open to Bruges. About midday the King telegraphed to Lord Gort that "the time is rapidly approaching when they" (the Belgian troops) "will be unable to continue the fight. The King will be forced to capitulate to avoid a collapse." Two hours later the French liaison authorities were told that the Belgian front was "about to break like a worn bowstring."

At 5 p.m on May 27 King Leopold decided to ask the Germans for an armistice, and the French and British missions were informed. An envoy was sent to the German High Command and returned with the demand for unconditional surrender. Leopold assented to these terms, and proposed that firing should cease at 4 a.m. on May 28. The Protocol of Capitulation was signed on the 28th. At 9 a.m. the German Command demanded free passage for its columns towards the sea. The King took up his quarters at the Château of Laeken as a prisoner of war. (*See* Chapters 85–86; also, for a later revaluation of the Belgian campaign, Chapters 145–146.)

Fighting a Way to the Sea

THE Dunkirk perimeter (*see* Chapter 90), within which the B.E.F. was now to be withdrawn, ran from a point between Gravelines and Dunkirk to Nieuport in Belgium. Inland the line went N.E. through Bergues, Furnes and so to the coast. By May 30 the British units were within the area allotted, and the work of embarkation was going on. Besides the B.E.F., parts of the French 1st and 7th Armies were withdrawn into the Dunkirk perimeter. French troops shared with British the rearward defence for some days; then took over the rearguard and fought on to cover the evacuation. General Prioux, of the French 1st Army, was captured with some of his troops, but many fought a way out and were evacuated with the B.E.F.

Dunkirk itself was held by the French, and certain French divisions occupied the sector west of the town. Embarkation had begun on the 26th and some 10,000 men had been taken off by the afternoon of the 28th. Despite shelling and aerial bombing and machine-gun attacks, the evacuation went steadily on and increased in rapidity. More than a hundred thousand French troops had made their way into the perimeter; by the 30th. 80,000 of the B.E.F. out of 250,000 remained. Next day Lord Gort left for England, under orders of the Government. He delegated his command to Major-Gen. the Hon. H. R. L. G. Alexander, who stayed until the remnant of the B.E.F. in a position to be evacuated (20,000 men) were safely away. By midnight of June 2–3 the task had been finished. The final tally of those saved was 211,532 fit men and 13,053 casualties; in addition 112,546 Allied troops were brought away, mostly French. (*See also* Chapters 147–148.)

Small Craft at Dunkirk

ON May 14 the British Admiralty had broadcast an order for owners of small craft to send in particulars within a fortnight. From selected vessels was formed the Small Vessels Pool. Twelve days later a call was made on the Pool; in all more than 600 small vessels of all kinds, manned by volunteers, proceeded to the water off Dunkirk to ferry men from the beaches to waiting warships and other craft. The Admiralty announced that 222 naval vessels and 665 other British craft took part; six destroyers and 24 minor war vessels were lost.

Churchill at the Helm

POLITICAL reactions to the momentous events in Flanders and France, coming after the Norwegian setback, were grave. In Britain (May 2) Mr. Chamberlain had made a statement on the Norway operations; on May 7–8 there was a debate in both Houses. Challenged by the Labour Party on the 8th, the Commons divided: 281 votes were cast for the Government and 200 against. In the late afternoon of the 10th Mr. Chamberlain resigned the Premiership; Mr. Churchill then became Prime Minister and formed a Cabinet in which members of the Opposition were included. Chamberlain remained as Lord President of the Council. Mr. Attlee (Lord Privy Seal), Lord Halifax (Foreign Secretary), Mr. Greenwood, Mr. Alexander (Admiralty), Mr. Eden (War), and Sir Archibald Sinclair (Air) were the other members.

After the withdrawal of the B.E.F. France had to face the Germans along the Somme and the Eastern Defences with considerably diminished strength: she had lost her 1st, 7th, and 9th Armies, plus the nine first-line divisions of the B.E.F. There still remained the British 51st (Highland) Division, which had been sent to the Saar some months earlier; also the British 1st Armoured Division disembarked at Cherbourg from May 20 and sent to the Somme. The story of these British formations is told in Chapters 93 and 149.

Battle of France Begins

THERE was a lull until June 5, when, with German forces marshalled now along the Somme to the sea, a second massive thrust was begun (Chapters 95, 98). On the 6th Reynaud reconstructed his Cabinet, himself taking over from Daladier the control of Foreign Affairs. By this time the French were giving ground at both ends of the long battle-line; the enemy was advancing along the coast and along the Ailette canal near Soissons, while he had captured the crest of the Chemin des Dames. Next day the Allied line had been pierced at several points; on the 8th the Germans broke through between the Bresle and the Seine and reached Forges les Eaux. Attacking in force from Rethel to the Argonne, the enemy on the 9th threatened the rear of the Maginot defences and prepared for a drive along the Marne valley to the capital. Advance enemy motorized units reached Rouen, and others appeared some 35 miles from Paris. The Aisne was crossed at Soissons.

There were now (June 10) three main thrust discernible towards Paris—across the lower Seine, through the valley of the Ourq, and to the east of Rheims. At this moment Italy declared war on France and Britain; hostilities were timed to begin at midnight on the 11th. On the 10th the French Government moved to Tours. Next day the French were across the Marne, and the Seine defences had been penetrated in some places. There was intense pressure at Montmédy. Rheims was lost on June 12, and Havre on the coast was menaced. Tours was bombed by German aircraft; Weygand told the French Cabinet that the military situation was desperate, and there was talk of asking the enemy for an armistice. The Germans were now approaching the suburbs of Paris, and on June 13 the military commander declared Paris an open city.

Enemy at the Gates of Paris

GERMAN columns closed in on Paris; the Montmédy hinge-point of the Maginot defences was heavily attacked. The French Cabinet considered asking for an armistice, and the British Government was asked whether it would release France from her obligation not to negotiate for an armistice or peace without British consent. Mr. Churchill, with Lords Halifax and Beaverbrook, were at Tours by invitation of M. Reynaud. It was agreed that another appeal should be made for help to President Roosevelt, and that a further meeting of French and British leaders should then take place before decisive action on armistice negotiations. (The French account does not mention the arrangement for further consultation to take place after receiving the reply of the President.)

The Germans entered Paris on June 14; the same day the French Government was transferred to Bordeaux. Verdun fell on the 15th, and German columns crossed the Rhine into Alsace. Italians advanced into Savoy and to the N. of Nice. On Sunday, June 16, the British Government proposed an Act of Union with France—an indissoluble union between the two nations, with reciprocal citizenship. The war would be continued with all the energy of the two countries. There were many meetings of the French Cabinet; at the last, about 10 at night, a vote was taken on the proposal to ask for an

armistice; 13 votes were cast in favour and two less against. Upon this Reynaud resigned and Pétain formed a Government; Pétain requested the Spanish Ambassador to France to communicate a request to Hitler for an armistice. At this time Mr. Churchill was in a train at London about to start for Bordeaux for the final conference with Reynaud, arranged three days before. He cancelled his journey and, after a meeting of the British Cabinet, sent a message to Pétain reminding the French Government of the still existing conditions which forbade separate peace negotiations.

On the French front conditions had deteriorated and the Maginot defences had been rendered useless by the rapid German advance in their rear. There was little military activity by Italy. Marshal Pétain on June 17 broadcast the announcement that he had taken over the Premiership; he went on to say that "we must cease to fight." Berlin broadcast the statement that Hitler and Mussolini would confer on the French request. Meanwhile the pursuit of the French Army would continue. On the 18th Pétain and Weygand ordered that resistance was to go on until there was an assurance that Germany and Italy would agree to honourable armistice terms. But concurrently all large French towns were declared "open," to save them from bombardment. Everywhere the German armies pressed on, though resistance was weakening. The Swiss frontier was reached on the 17th; by the 19th the enemy was at Lyons. Almost half the country had been captured.

France Makes Peace

THE German reply reached Bordeaux on the 18th and asked for the names of four French plenipotentiaries; these were sent on the 19th, and the meeting with the Germans was arranged to take place at Compi gne on the 21st. Here, in the railway carriage in which the Germans had been received in 1918, the French delegates were given the German terms. The French Cabinet considered them during June 22. At 6.50 p.m. that evening the armistice was signed. The terms are printed in pages 1018–1019. (*See* Chapters 96, 98.) The French Armistice did not come into force until France had negotiated one with Italy, and Italy had in due course notified the German government of its being concluded. The French plenipotentiaries proceeded to Rome where, on June 24 at 6.15 p.m., the armistice with Italy was signed. Hostilities in France ceased on June 25 at 1.35 a.m., though some troops in the Maginot defences fought on in ignorance until the 29th.

Soon after hostilities between France and Germany and Italy had thus ceased France, dismembered and, many Frenchmen felt, dishonoured, tore up her Liberal Constitution and entered upon a dictatorial regime under the aged Pétain. On June 28 de Gaulle, recently promoted General, met Mr. Churchill in London and outlined a fighting policy for the Free French.

Swift Preventive Action at Oran and Dakar

PÉTAIN, begging off solemn obligations to the British, declined to secure his former Allies against a French Fleet in German hands, a decision which involved Britain in taking steps, both by seizure and gunfire, to prevent that event. With the lack of integrity of Pétain went the treachery of Admiral Darlan. On July 3, failing acceptance of British proposals for the safety of the French fleet at Oran, a British battle squadron fired on and sank a number of the French warships. Five days later, at Dakar, the French warship "Richelieu" was immobilized by the Royal Navy." (*see* Chapter 105).

These sad actions were among the final episodes in a series of incredibilities, among which, for the British people, was a French government alined with the traditional enemy of that land and even malevolent towards her old comrades in arms. On July 30 France and French North Africa were classed as enemy-controlled territory. On September 23 an abortive attempt was made to seize Dakar by British ships carrying Free French under de Gaulle who, in face of strong opposition, preferred to discontinue the action rather than fight his own countrymen who refused to transfer allegiance to him.

Now the apathy of the "phoney war" period was changed to a realization of the dire seriousness to Britain and the likelihood of a large-scale invasion. On July 14 the roar of the British lion was heard in Berlin, when Mr. Churchill broadcast and swore that London should lie in ashes before "it should be tamely and abjectly enslaved." The Battle of France was ended: the Battle of Britain had begun.

Battle of Britain Begins

ALREADY —June 29—the Channel Islands were in German hands. Soon the air bombardment of Britain was revealed as Hitler's first mode of direct attack as prelude to a large-scale attempt at invasion. By August 8, 258 men, women and children had been killed from the air.

Let us, for a moment, look at this phase from Hitler's viewpoint. He had envisaged a swift conquest of Britain, deeming that essential for the fulfilment of his grandiose imperial dream. He knew by this time that, even with the advantage of surprise, a seaborne invading force involves terrific casualties. Nevertheless, Hitler decided that what Napoleon deemed impossible and what Von Moltke decided against could be done. Shipping of every kind was concentrated in the Channel ports from Norway, Germany, Denmark, Holland, and numbers of invasion barges were marshalled. Troops were concentrated on the French coast.

In Britain, coastal defence works were hurried forward. The air bombardment steadily increased in ferocity. The Government repeated its warnings against the invasion threat; yet nothing happened. Had Hitler decided as Napoleon, standing on the heights above Boulogne, had decided before him? It seemed so. During this time the Home Guard gained both in prestige and numbers. But, like the Army, it was handicapped by lack of arms; our vast losses at Dunkirk were being felt.

Menace of Invasion

WHY, it is often asked, did not Germany risk invasion in the summer of 1940 when, as she must well have known, British defences were in their rudimentary stage and her chances of success were at the zenith? The answer must be that Nazi experts regarded invasion by water as contingent on complete mastery of the air. That mastery was never attained. Speaking on the air, September 9, the Prime Minister told his hearers that invasion could not long be delayed. That by 1942 it had still failed to materialize is one of the major strategical mysteries of the War.

The war at sea was blockade and counter blockade, a method of applying mutually tourniquets designed to stop or impede the free flow of commodities.

The first days of autumn saw Hitler casting about for an alternative strategy to replace the abortive blitzkrieg that was to have ended in London goose-steps by October. His strategy was to make Italy perform to full nuisance value in the Mediterranean, and to attempt to bring Spain, weak from internecine strife, into the Axis to secure Gibraltar. France was offered the bait of softened terms—at Italy's expense. Mussolini's caterwauling for Nice, Corsica, Jibuti and Tunis, were ignored. On October 4, Mussolini and Hitler met at the Brenner. On the 28th the Italians, who had invaded Albania (*see* Chapters 124, 129, 152) attacked Greece and met with fierce unexpected resistance.

Wavell's Campaign in Libya

IN Africa, Libya being no longer exposed to attack from French North Africa, the Italians invaded Egypt (September 12), and captured Sollum; they advanced in great strength to Makfila, but by December Imperial forces had the situation in hand and were advancing swiftly and strongly, covering 500 miles in two months and taking 116,000 prisoners. The necessity to send assistance to Greece at that point hampered a campaign conducted with brilliance by General Sir Archibald Wavell. (*See* Chapters 131, 153.)

On December 23 Imperial troops were shelling Bardia from Halfaya and our Intelligence was discovering that no prisoner taken had the remotest notion of why he had been called on to fight Britain. On Christmas Eve Mr. Churchill broadcast to the Italian people in an attempt to get the truth to them. From that point of the African campaign onwards it was clear that the state of war between Britain and Fascist Italy was one of a regime and not of a people. The Italians desired peace and friendship. While the battle was proceeding well with the British in Libya, and badly for Graziani and his disheartened troops, Italy was suffering defeats in her attempt to hold what she had snatched after the fall of France—British Somaliland. In August, 1940, the Negus of Abyssinia was organizing troops in Khartoum and making liaison with the chiefs of Gojjam for the drive to recover his stolen realm. The last two months of the year were a period of skirmishes preliminary to the great battles which extinguished the African Empire of Italy.

On the home front the chief events of the year's end were: November 9, registration of men of 20–38; a general quickening of the national consciousness that production lagged and that the blame lay with both workers and works managements. October 6–9, the Trade Union Congress met at Southport and gave a hundred per cent endorsement to the country's war aims. Rations were reduced on September 30: butter was cut to 2 oz. per week; meat was reduced by 4d. per week (2s. 2d. to 1s. 10d.).

World-wide War Threatened

THE end of 1940 brought a change in the general war scene in that it saw the passing of its localized character and its extension, and threat of extension, to world-wide dimensions. Opinion in America, where the Isolationist was receiving a set-back, was hardening. It was clear to many that the U.S.A. must be involved sooner or later on the side of the Allies. In the East, the whole strategic position had been modified by the occupation of northern Indo-China by Japan, giving her air bases within range of the Burma Road and making the first step towards the later aggressive war down the Malay Peninsula to the Netherlands East Indies. So the year passed with clouds of war lowering west and east.

Chapter 152

ITALO-GREEK CAMPAIGN: FROM CAPTURE OF KLISURA TO THE GERMAN INVASION

Capture of Klisura, Jan. 10, 1941—Thrust Towards Tepelini—Wavell Confers with Metaxas—Metaxas' Sudden Death: Alexander Korizis Becomes Premier —Great Italian Offensive from Lake Okhrida to the Adriatic: Greeks Stand Firm—Hitler Crosses Bulgaria to Bolster up Mussolini's Flagging Armies— Nazis Face Greeks Along the Frontiers—Nazi Invasion Begins

(The earlier story of the campaign is told in Chapters 124 and 129)

ALTHOUGH for the Greek man-in-the-street the new year of 1941 opened brightly enough—had not the Greek armies in Albania recently fought their way into Argyrokastro and Himara? Were they not now threatening Valona and Berat?—the better-informed were inclined to glimpse behind the flag-decked streets and cheering crowds the hollowness of the victory that had been won. True, the Italians had been thrashed; thousands of Mussolini's finest troops had been slain, wounded, or taken prisoner, and the thousands that remained seemed doomed to battle ineffectually against the granite wall of Greek resistance. But could Hitler afford to let his ally—his 'vassal, rather—be defeated, and defeated, moreover, not by one of the great powers but by one of the smallest and, militarily speaking, weakest nations of the European family? Hitler, as the event was soon to prove, could not so afford; and every message that came from Buda and Bucharest, Belgrade and Sofia contained a note of menace, filled as they were with news of German troop movements, all directed ominously enough down the Danube.

So far, however, Greece still thought of the war as being an Italo-Greek concern. Considerable assistance had been rendered to the Greeks by the British, it was true; thus altogether some 5,000 men of the R.A.F. and ancillary troops had come to Greece, and much war material, largely drawn from the huge quantities left behind by the Italians in the Libyan battle, had been landed at the Piraeus. Early in January arrived the greatest convoy to date, bringing tanks, Bren-gun carriers, and military supplies of every kind. This was the convoy, it may be noted, which was fiercely assailed by the German and Italian air forces in the Sicilian Channel on January 10, when H.M.S. "Illustrious" was damaged and H.M.S. "Southampton" so badly mauled that she had to be abandoned and subsequently sunk by our own forces.

But no British expeditionary force had arrived, nor had the Greeks asked for one. Rather there seemed to be a tacit understanding that, in order to "keep in" with Germany, Greece must not accept too much help from Britain. As yet Germany had done little or nothing to assist her ally, and the German Legation still functioned in Athens.

Probably in Government circles it was realized that this state of affairs could not continue indefinitely; but amongst the population as a whole there was a willingness to believe, even against all the evidence, in Germany's good faith. After all, the Germans had often demonstrated their friendship for Greece, and German scholars had revealed the greatness of the Greece of antiquity.

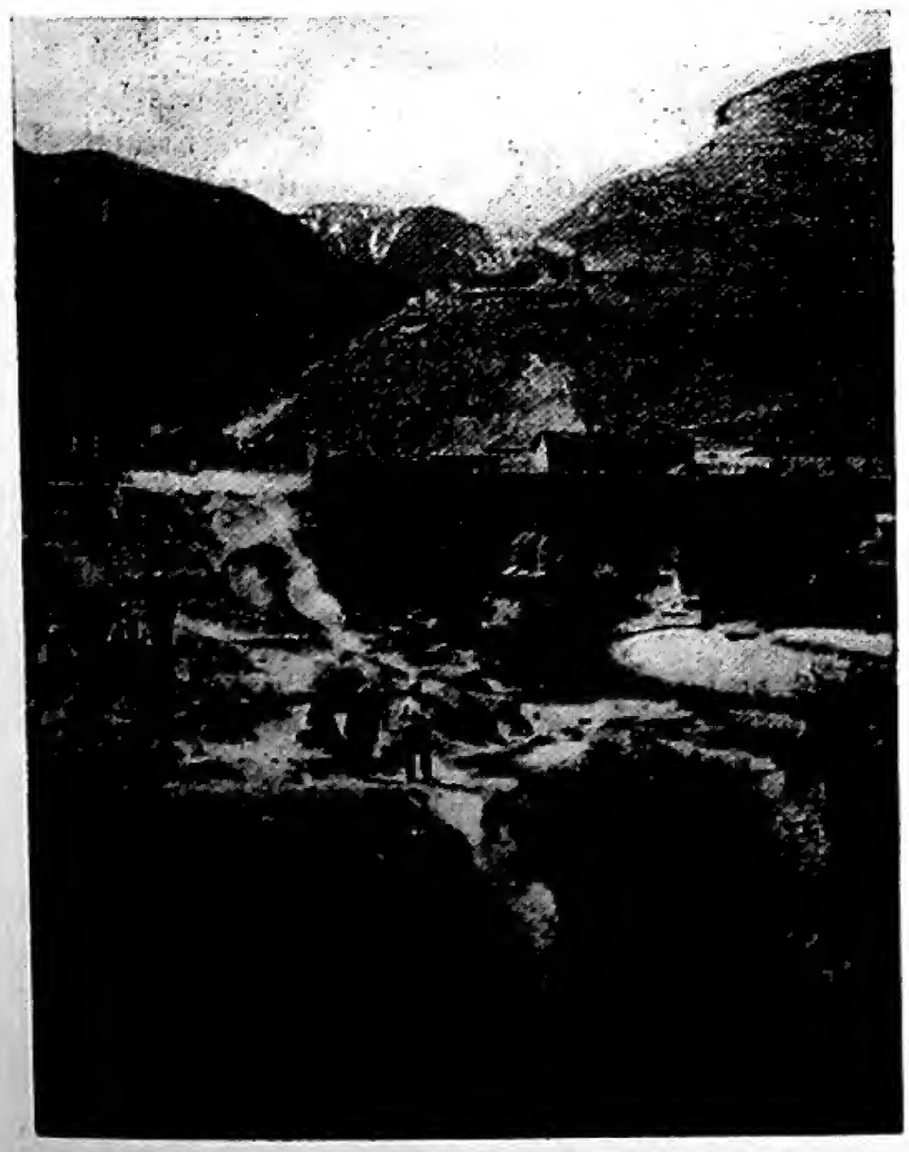
It was hard to reconcile these many services with the belief that even now Germany was planning invasion and the murder of Greek independence.

As yet the pessimists had little but rumour to go upon, and public attention was concentrated on the struggle in the Albanian mountains, where the Greek army was still proving more than a match for the Italians. Throughout January the communiqués spoke of local advances along the coast and in the centre, of attacks and counter-attacks, of stubborn fighting here and there along the jagged front. For the most part the Greeks made steady progress, nibbling their way from point to point along the heights; while the Italians, with their tanks and mechanized transport, preferred the roads along the valleys. And that preference proved



ITALIAN OFFENSIVE OF MARCH 9, 1941

From March 9 to March 15 the Italians strove desperately to drive back the Greeks along the line (shown dotted) from Lake Okhrida to the Adriatic, but the Greeks gave no ground. Heavy black line indicates the frontiers.



KLISURA, BASTION IN ITALIAN DEFENCES

The key-town of Klisura, in a gorge which forms a gateway between the Macedonian plain and the Adriatic, was taken by the Greeks after a month's hard fighting on January 10, 1941. Its strategical importance, barring the way to Valona, is seen from the map at top of page.

Photo, E.N.A.



BLENHEIM BOMBERS WHICH AIDED THE GREEKS

Units of the Royal Air Force began to reach Greece in November, 1940, and during six months of arduous service our bombers made some 300 raids. The above photograph shows a Blenheim returning to its airfield at dusk after an operation over Albania during December, 1940.

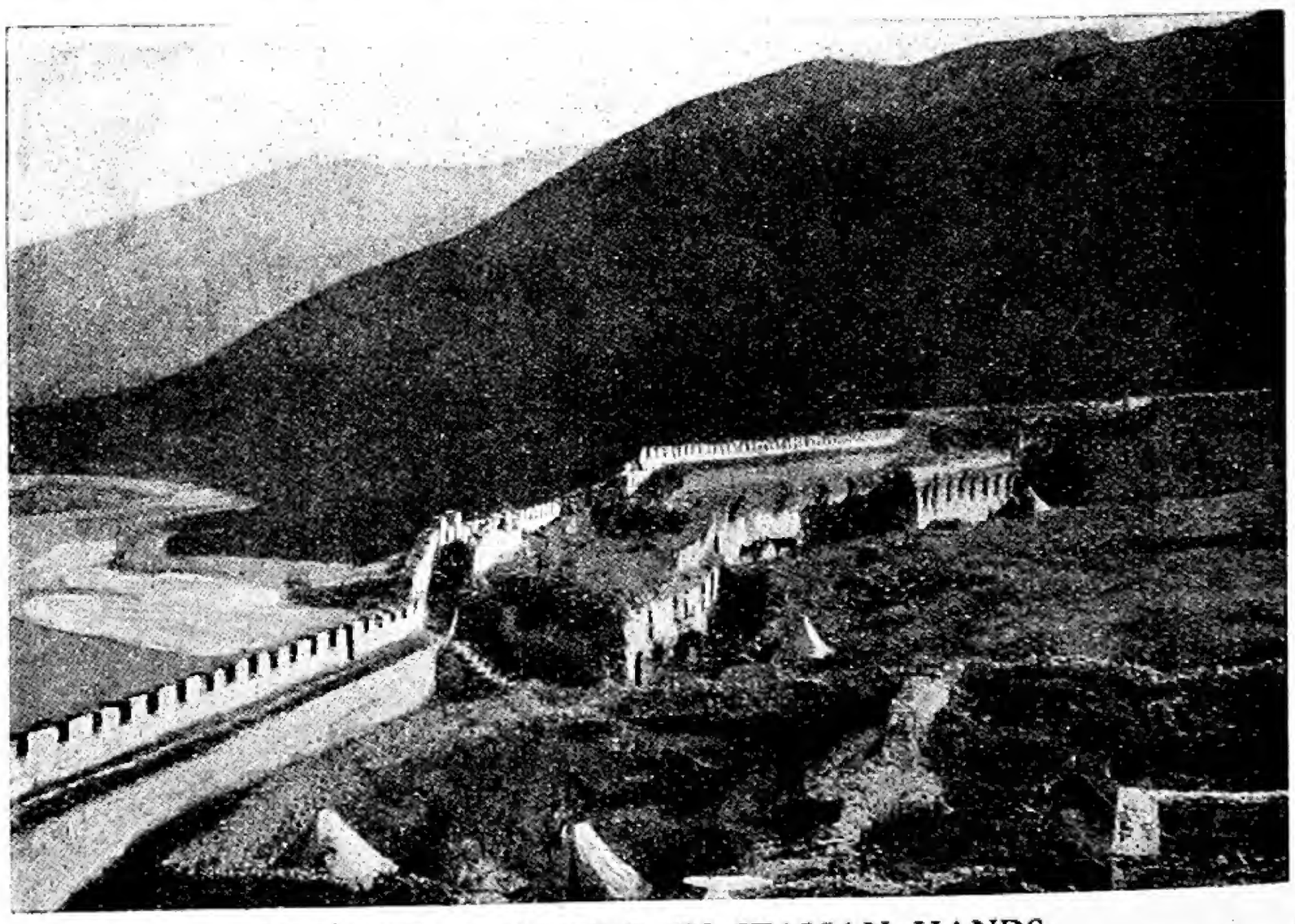
Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

their undoing, since time and again they were outflanked by the Greeks moving rapidly along the heights above, and in order to avoid being cut off the Italians often had to beat a precipitate retreat, leaving hundreds of prisoners behind and much of their supplies. In the air the Royal Air Force bombed the Italian ports on both sides of the Adriatic, particularly Valona and Brindisi, while the Italians raided Corfu and on occasion ventured as far as the Piraeus, the port of Athens, and Salonika. Then at sea ships of the Royal Hellenic Navy emulated the gallant deeds of the soldiers battling their way along the snowbound roads and mountain tracks. Thus on Christmas Eve the submarine "Papanicolis" (Lt.-Cmdr. Milton Iatrides) worked havoc amongst an Italian convoy in the Straits of Otranto (*see* illus. p. 1458), and a few days later the submarine "Katsonis" torpedoed and blew up an Italian munitions-carrying tanker at Menders Point; also the destroyer "Aetos" sank an Italian submarine.

On January 10 the joy-bells pealed once again in Athens following the announcement that Klisura had fallen to the Greek arms. The people poured into the streets and vociferously cheered King George and General Metaxas when they appeared on the balcony of the palace, while in the hospitals the wounded and frost-bitten raised themselves in their beds and cheered. Klisura had been the Greeks' principal objective since the fall of Argyrokastro, inasmuch as it was a key town in the defence line drawn by the Italians across the mountains to bar the way to Valona and the heart of Albania. The Italians had ringed it with a triple line of trenches and concrete emplacements, fronted by skilfully-constructed belts of barbed wire. Everything had been done to make it impregnable, and the local commander had issued the order that retreat would be considered tantamount to desertion. Yet after a month's hard fighting the day came when the Greeks carried the last heights above the town at the bayonet point. Swarming down the mountain side, they entered the town hard on the heels of the retreating Italians, and were given a great reception by those of the Albanian population who had remained. As the Italians hurried down the road which led to Berat they were machine-gunned by the R.A.F. A few days later this fresh defeat had its repercussion in the Italian High Command; on January 13 it was announced that General Soddu, the Commander-in-Chief in Albania, had resigned, "for health reasons," and was to be succeeded by General Ugo Cavallero, Chief of the General Staff.

Following the capture of Klisura the Greeks continued their progress along the road to Berat, and also along the heights westward in the direction of Tepelini, with a view to linking up with their columns pushing along the coast towards Valona. Little information was given in the communiqués, but the tale was always one of local progress and often of captured material and prisoners. Thus on January 18 a thousand prisoners were claimed, among the officers being Colonel Meneghetti of the 77th Regiment, the "Wolves of Tuscany," which had only recently arrived in Albania. Interviewed after his capture, Meneghetti said that his division had been decimated in the course of the ten days' battle just concluded, and he also confirmed the reports of increasing desertions from

On Towards Valona



TEPELINI REMAINED IN ITALIAN HANDS

The town of Tepelini, at the junction of the rivers Vijose and Drinon, was the next Greek objective after the capture of Klisura, on Jan. 10. It was strongly held by the enemy, however, and from it was launched a massive attack during the Italian offensive of March 9–15, 1941.

Photo, E.N.A.

the Italian lines and of heavy losses in the sea passage; thus he vouchsafed the information that a Greek submarine had recently torpedoed two Italian transports, the "Lombardia" and the "Liguria." So many prisoners were taken in this action that the wits in the Athenian cafés expressed the view that the Tuscan Wolves must have been wolves in sheep's clothing.

But in truth the Italians had little stomach for war, and none for this kind of conflict; they had expected a war of waving flags and blaring bands, and had made little or no preparation for



the actual war of blood and frostbite, cold and weariness. No wonder the prisoners made a melancholy, even a pitiable, spectacle as they were marched away down the road to Janina. "There goes the Second Roman Empire," said a Greek officer sardonically as he saw one batch pass. Of course, the Greeks, too, had to face the same bitter weather, to trudge through the same mud and flounder in the same deep snowdrifts; like the Italians they suffered from wounds and frostbite, they were filthy and exhausted by the strain of fighting in appalling conditions. Yet they struggled on, living on little more than a crust of bread and melted snow, with no fires and little shelter, poor uniforms and boots in tatters, and often with no gloves. Yet what a difference in their morale!—all the difference that exists between free men fighting for their homes and conscript slaves sent to a war for which they have no heart.

Twice in January General Wavell flew across from Alexandria for a conference with General Metaxas and the Greek High Command. On the second occasion he had hardly left Athens when the Greek dictator-premier died with tragic suddenness—on the morning of January 29, following a minor throat operation. On a bitterly cold day he was borne to his grave through the streets of Athens, mourned by all his countrymen, though from Rome there came the fantastic story that he had died in the midst of a revolt by the infuriated Athenian populace. He had been Prime Minister of Greece since 1936, and as the man who retorted "No" to Mussolini's demand that Greece should open her gates to the Italian invader, he will live in her history. His passing made an irreparable gap in the Greek front, but a few hours after his death a successor was found in the person of Alexander Korizis, Governor of the National Bank of Greece. The new Premier pledged himself to continue Metaxas' policy of victory over the foreign aggressor and of social progress; for the rest, the Cabinet remained in office.

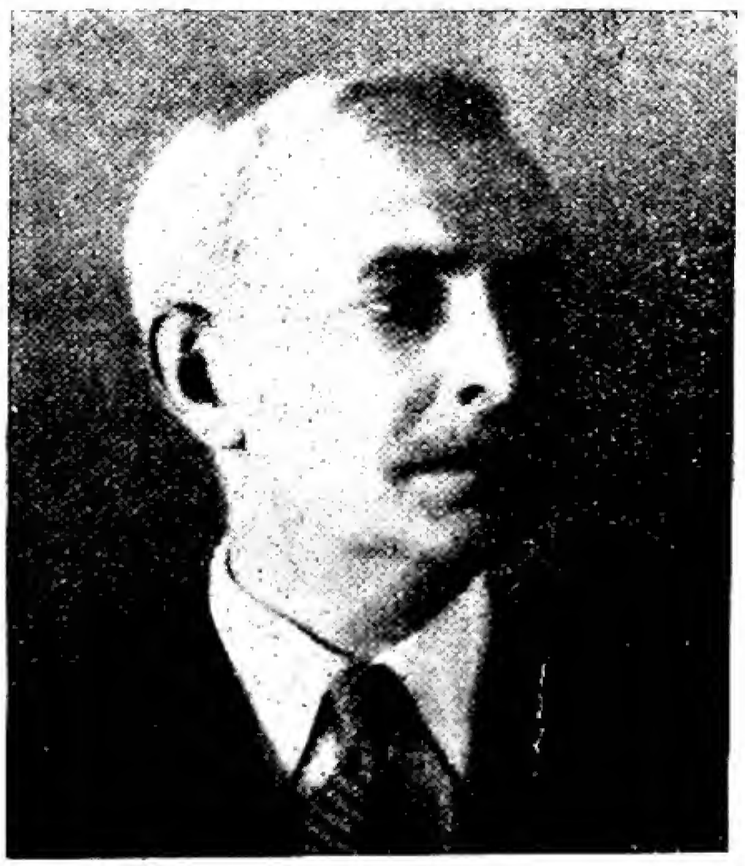
During February fighting continued in Albania, more particularly in the central sector, where, in the middle of the month, the Greeks delivered a large-scale attack which was attended by a considerable measure of success, some 7,000 prisoners being taken. March came, and Cavallero, urged on by his master in Rome, planned a great offensive in which he hoped to hack his way through the Greek lines. But news of the approaching stroke trickled through to the Greeks, and on March 6



IRREPARABLE LOSS TO GREECE

On January 29, 1941, General John Metaxas died, after serving his country as Premier since 1936. Above, Metaxas at his desk; centre, the funeral procession in Athens. Below, Alexander Korizis, who succeeded Metaxas; a former Minister of Social Welfare, he died less than three months later, on April 18.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Bosshard; Keystone



General Papagos anticipated the Italians by launching a local offensive of his own, gaining the mastery of the territory which the Italians had intended to be their jumping-off ground. Cavallero took several days to reorganize, but on March 9 he hurled his legions against the Greek lines, so that from Lake Okhrida to the Adriatic there was one long battle-front blazing with furious war. The principal zone of operations was the sector facing Tepelini, extending from the valley of the Aoos to the southern slopes of Mount Tomori. On this narrow front—it was barely 20 miles in width—seven Italian divisions were flung into the fight, supported by picked regiments of Blackshirts and storm troops. For six days the battle





FROM THE GREEK SIDE

Some idea of the difficult terrain and wintry conditions encountered by the advancing Greeks is given by these photographs. Top, Red Cross convoy with wounded returning from Albanian front; centre, Greek policeman at crossroads, one of which leads to Tirana, Albanian capital; below, Greek bivouac in the mountains.

Photos, Bosshard

raged continuously, but in spite of the frantic efforts of the Alpini and Bersaglieri the Greek line held.

The attackers suffered thousands of casualties—among them several members of the Fascist Grand Council, including Barbarini and Bottai, Minister of Education, who were among the slain, and Professor Pellegrini. It was reported that Mussolini himself was present at the Italian H.Q., and, if so, his humiliation and consequent rage must have been extreme. "The enemy has failed to occupy a yard of territory," said a semi-official statement issued in Athens, "and the offensive has been completely checked."

A few days later the Italians resumed their offensive—this time on a more limited front—and again all the attacks were blasted by the Greek guns. "The losses of the Italians were terrific," said the announcer on Athens radio on March 20; "as they came on in waves they were mown down in masses, and the field was strewn with dead." He concluded with a tribute to the part played by the R.A.F. in this battle, as in all its predecessors: "Another day of Mussolini's spring has added more victory posies to Greek and British buttonholes."

But now the Greeks, although they had more than held their own in the fight with the Italians in the Albanian mountains, were nerving themselves to a struggle with a far more dangerous foe. As March opened the German legions crossed the Danube into Bulgaria, and by the evening of March 3 Hitler's troops faced the Greek sentries on the frontier.

Yet even now there were some in Greece who could not bring themselves to believe that Germany was about to add their country to the ever-lengthening list of her guiltless victims; they tried to convince themselves that Hitler's armies just across the frontier in Bulgaria were nothing but a demonstration in force, dispatched as the prelude to an ultimatum to Athens to order the British—few as these helpers were—to withdraw from Greece.

This is the motif that runs through the nobly expressed "Open Letter to Adolf Hitler" by Georges Vlachos, published in an Athens newspaper on March 8.

"Excellency," it began, "Greece, as you know, wished to keep out of the present war . . . because she was exhausted, because she had fought many wars, and because her geographical position is such that she could not have as an enemy either the Germans on land or the English at sea. But then the Helle was sunk, and Greece turned—do you

remember, Excellency?—towards yourself, and asked for your protection. In reply she was advised not to offer any pretext, i.e. not to mobilize and to stay quiet. Then on October 28 came the Italian ultimatum."

"To whom then could Greece have turned? Towards Italy, whose valueless signature we had in our pocket with the remains of the torpedoes? Towards yourself? But unfortunately that very morning you were at Florence. . . . So Greece turned to the only signatory of her independence that was left, to the English. And those whose own homeland was in flames, who were keeping anxious watch and ward on the Channel, who, they said it themselves, had not sufficient material for their own defence—they came, and came immediately. Without haggling, without excuses, they came, and a few days later on the front in the mountains of Epirus, where the brutal Italian aggression had begun, fell together the Greek troops and the first English airman. . . ."

But it was not we, your Excellency, who made the English come to Greece. It was the Italians. And now you wish us to say farewell to those whom the Italians brought here. So be it. Let us say it. But to whom? To the living. But how can we throw out the dead? Those who died on our mountains. Those who, wounded, fell to earth in Attica and drew there their last breath. Those who at a time when their own country was in flames came to Greece and fought there, died there, and found their graves there."

"Listen, your Excellency. "Vlachos continued. "There are deeds which cannot be done in Greece, and that is one of them. We cannot throw out either the living or the dead. We will throw out no one; but we shall stand here upright by their side until the day when the sunshine breaks through the storm."

In another passage Vlachos said the Italians had been thrashed openly and for all







ITALIANS IN ALBANIA

Centre, Italian prisoners captured in the fighting around Klisura, taken by the Greeks on January 10, 1941. Lower photograph, airborne Italian troops just after landing in Albania. At the top of page is a scene when Greeks in forward positions fired upon an advancing Italian patrol.

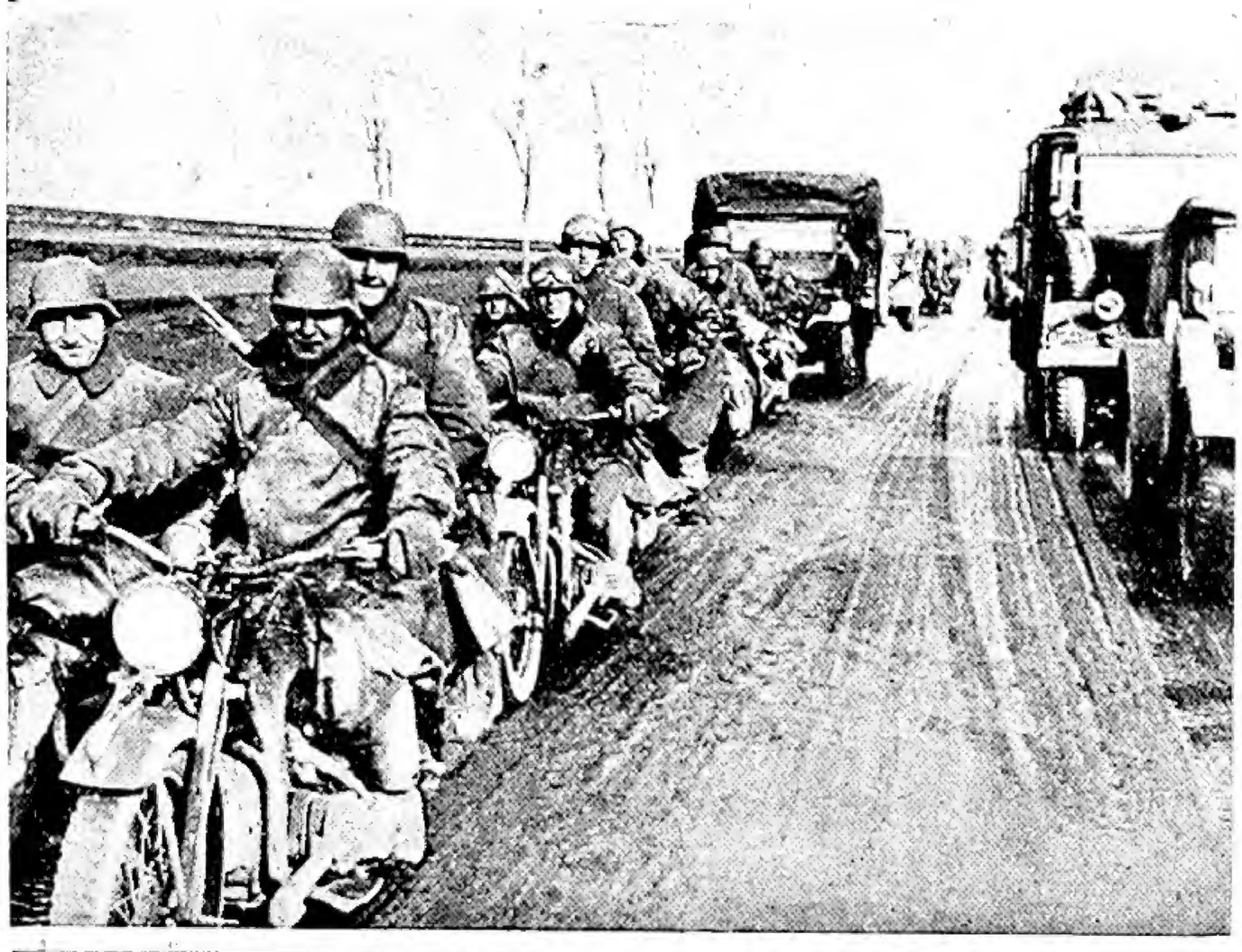
Photos, Wide World; Associated Press; Planet News

eternity; and asked, pertinently enough, would not public opinion of the whole world be certain of this thrashing as soon as a single German soldier stepped on to Greek soil? Everyone was saying that Hitler intended to invade Greece, but

"we do not believe that your army is willing to disgrace itself by such an action. We do not believe that a great power armed to the teeth with a population of 85 millions . . . wishes to attack on the flank a little country, already struggling for its liberty against an empire of 45 million men."

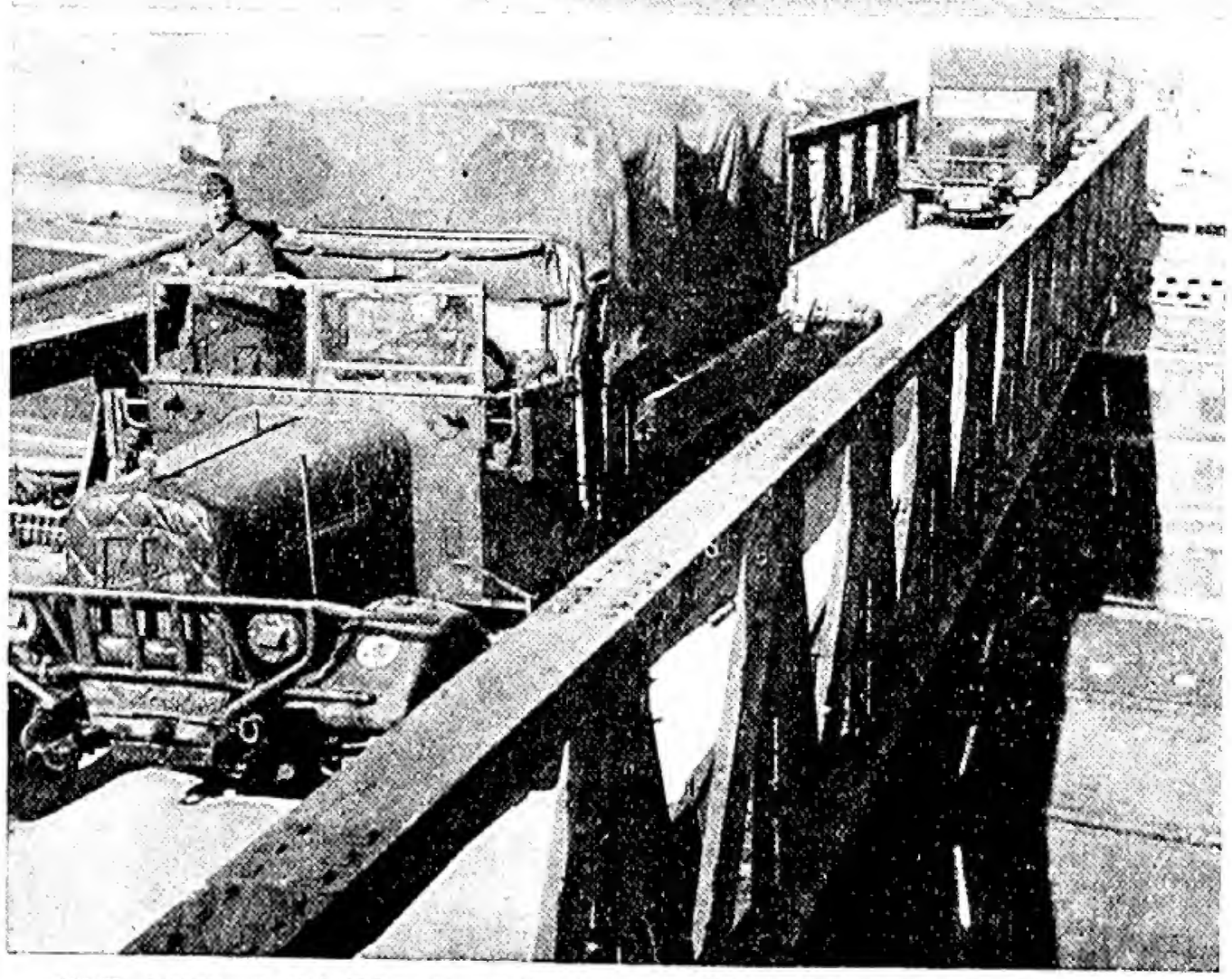
"What would your army do?" asked Vlachos in conclusion, "if instead of horse and artillery we sent to receive them on the frontier our twenty thousand wounded in their bloody bandages? But no, that cannot be. Small or great, that part of the Greek army which can be sent there will stand in Thrace as they have stood in Epirus. There they will await the return from Berlin of the Runner, who came five years ago to light the torch at Olympus. We shall see this torch light a fire, a fire which will light this little nation, which has taught all other nations how to live, and will now teach them how to die."

At this new and greater crisis the little country, it was plain, was not to be intimidated. On March 2 Mr. Eden









HITLER'S ARMIES CROSS BULGARIA TO INVADE GREECE

On March 1, 1941, Bulgaria ratified the Three-Power Pact, and almost at once the waiting German troops crossed the Danube into Bulgaria. Top, left, Nazi motorized troops on the road to Sofia ; right, an armoured column ; lower, left, villagers watching German tanks ; lower right, a Nazi supply convoy crossing a Danube bridge.

Photos, Sport & General ; Planet News ; Keystone ; Associated Press





BULGARIA JOINS THE AXIS

Top, at Vienna on March 1, 1941, Bulgaria adheres to the Tripartite Pact: Bogdan Filoff (left) signs for Bulgaria; Ribbentrop (centre), for Germany; and Ciano (right), for Italy. In lower photograph King Boris confers with Field-Marshal List, German commander-in-chief in the Balkans campaign.

Photos, Associated Press

and General Sir John Dill arrived in Athens on an official visit, and had long discussions with King George and M. Korizis; the two Governments, it was announced in a communiqué issued three days later, proceeded to a thorough review of the situation in the Balkans where all their efforts continued to be directed towards preventing an extension of the war. They found themselves in complete agreement on all aspects of the situation. In a message to the Greek people on the conclusion of his visit Mr. Eden expressed England's pride that the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force had had the privilege of contributing to the Greeks' magnificent victories.

"It was said in Athens, 2,300 years ago, that the secret of happiness is freedom and that the secret of freedom is courage. You are giving new life to this great tradition . . . the future may be arduous, but be assured we shall not rest or falter until the final victory has been won."

Throughout March the German menace grew apace and, following the absorption of Bulgaria into the Axis fold, tremendous pressure was brought to bear on Yugoslavia to submit likewise. On March 25 the Greeks celebrated the 120th anniversary of their country's independence—celebrated it in a mood of ardent enthusiasm, tinged with a grim realism.

"As in 1821, so in 1941," said M. Alexander Korizis in an address to members of the Metaxas Youth Movement, "the same divine spirit moves us, the same high moral ideals and faith in freedom and honour." "On this day of proud memories," said Mr. Churchill in a special message to the Greek people, "I would add one brief tribute to those which the whole civilized world is paying to the valour of the Greek nation. One hundred and twenty years ago all that was noblest in England strove in the cause of Greek independence and rejoiced in its achievement. Today that epic struggle is being repeated against greater odds but with equal courage and with no less certainty of success. We in England know that the cause for which Byron died is a sacred cause; we are resolved to sustain it." On April 6 German troops crossed the frontier from Bulgaria: the invasion of Greece had begun.





WHEN AUSTRALIANS CAPTURED TOBRUK

On the evening of January 20, 1941, our guns began a heavy bombardment of Tobruk, and next day sappers cleared a way through the wire. Then Australian infantry swept down through gaps in the wire (top) on to enemy trenches and stormed the perimeter. Through the day and night the British advance went steadily on; the old cruiser 'San Giorgio' had been immobilized by R.A.F. bombers on January 19, and was thereupon used as a floating battery by the Italians; she is seen in the centre photograph, beyond the trail of smoke from burning oil dumps. Tobruk surrendered on the 22nd, over 15,000 prisoners being taken; some Italian naval prisoners are seen being marched away in lower photograph.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright



Chapter 153

WAVELL'S LIBYAN CAMPAIGN: TO THE CAPTURE OF BENGHAZI, FEBRUARY, 1941

Progress During January—The Advance to Tobruk—Spoils of Victory—Stiff Enemy Resistance at Derna—Fine Work by Creagh's Armoured Force: the Dash Across the Desert to Soluk—Italians Intercepted at Beda Fomm—Fall of Benghazi—All Cyrenaica in British Hands—Churchill's Tribute

(*For earlier operations and an appreciation of strategy see Chapters 130 and 131*)

AFTER capturing Bardia (*see* Chap. 131) the Army of the Nile pressed on along the coast and across the desert wastes to Tobruk. Already, indeed, Graziani's naval base and military stronghold had been practically invested by the British advanced units, and by January 6 an iron ring had been drawn completely about the outer perimeter of the defence system, some 30 miles in length. For a fortnight General Wilson made his preparations, bringing up fresh troops, guns and tanks in readiness for the onslaught. At nightfall on January 20 the British guns began a continuous bombardment of the enemy's positions, and at dawn the next day the infantry and tanks went over the top, preceded by a colossal box barrage.

After the Australian sappers had cleared a way through the enemy wire and rendered harmless many of the minefields and booby traps with which the desert had been liberally besprinkled, the Australian infantry swept down on the Italian trenches and gun pits. The outer perimeter of the defences was soon stormed, and through the gaps pushed the British tanks and motorized detachments. The inner perimeter, 19 miles long, was still held by the defenders, however, and there was particularly heavy fighting in the neighbourhood of the forts Pilastrino, Solario and Airente, lying on the high ground to the south-west of Tobruk. But before evening these, too, had fallen to the Australians, and as night fell the vanguard of the attackers was only two miles from Tobruk itself. Action continued throughout the night—a night lit by the flames rising from the ships blazing in the harbour, including the old warship "San Giorgio."

At break of day on January 22 the Australians renewed their advance and swept aside the last defenders of Tobruk. At 10.15 a.m. the town surrendered. Shortly afterwards the Australian brigadier received the town's formal submission. "The town capitulates and all the troops are disarming," said Admiral Vietina, commander of the naval base, who was accompanied by General della Mura, commander of the 61st Metropolitan Division, and Major-General Barberis, commander of the garrison troops; the Brigadier in his reply ordered that the position of every minefield in the harbour and town should be at once indicated to his men. Fighting continued in the western sector for a few hours more, but by the evening resistance was at an end. Over 15,000 prisoners were taken and some hundreds of guns. The attackers' casualties were still extraordinarily light—under 500.

While the long columns of Italian prisoners passed eastwards on their way to Egypt, Wilson's men pressed on to the west. The Italian aerodrome at Gazala was occupied by our mechanized units on January 24, and the advance was continued to Derna, some 100 miles west of Tobruk. Its garrison was smaller than Tobruk's, and its defences were far less strong; yet it was here





ARTILLERY WHICH DETERMINED FATE OF TOBRUK

The advance on Tobruk was covered by a mighty box-barrage put up by British guns, one of which is seen in action in the top photograph. Thus protected, our infantry and tanks went 'over the top.' Casualties in the operation were remarkably light—less than 500. Lower photograph is a close-up of an Italian field gun of the Tobruk defences.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; E.N.A.



ARMY OF THE NILE CONQUERS CYRENAICA

This map illustrates the rapid progress of Wavell's Army along the coastal road to Benghazi, and the dashing advance of the armoured force which cut across the desert via Mekili and Msus to intercept Italian troops withdrawing from the capital of the province. Important dates are : capture of Bardia, Jan. 5, 1941 ; Tobruk, Jan. 22 ; Derna, Jan. 30 ; and Benghazi, Feb. 6.

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*

that the Italians offered their stiffest resistance of the two months' campaign. It was only a delaying action, however, designed to give time for the men of the garrison to be withdrawn along the road to Barce and Benghazi. By January 27 battle had been joined. An Italian counter-attack in some force was speedily crushed, and then for some days an artillery duel was in progress, while in the desert to the south there were bitter clashes between the infantry and tanks of both sides. Then the 19th Australian Infantry Brigade carried the heights of the wadi above Derna at the bayonet point, repelled another Italian counter-attack with heavy losses to the enemy, and overran the outposts. On January 30 the Australian and British troops poured down the side of the escarpment and captured the town. Their advance was hardly at all hampered by the fact that the Italians in retreating had blown up the hairpin roads leading down from the escarpment, since the Australian sappers managed to repair the breaches almost as soon as their comrades had made their way into the town by devious routes.

With Derna in his hands, General O'Connor continued his march through Northern Cyrenaica. Some opposition was encountered at Cyrene, but the place was captured on February 3 and the advance proceeded. Meanwhile, General Creagh's armoured force had been detached to move across the desert via Mekili, with the object of cutting off the Italian retreat from Benghazi. It had been anticipated that the enemy would make a stand in the Cyrenaican capital, and it had been hoped, therefore, that time would permit of a stay of some ten days at Mekili, to build up reserves and to consolidate the ever-lengthening lines of communication. But now news came that the Italians were about to abandon Benghazi and, indeed, had already begun to withdraw their troops and tanks down the coastal road. At once General O'Connor gave orders to the armoured force to push ahead as rapidly as possible "to prevent the enemy escaping and destroy him as opportunity offers." So from Mekili at first light on February 4 General Creagh's vanguard—composed of 11th Hussars, 2nd Rifle Brigade, and the 4th and 106th R.H.A.—moved out on the 150-mile dash across the desert to the Benghazi-Tripoli road. At midday it was followed by the main force. The going across the rough desert was abominable; the road was no more than a track, and everywhere strewn with boulders and slabs of rock. The dust thrown up by the press of vehicles made a perpetual cloud; then a gale sprang up, accompanied by an icy rain. At 5 p.m. the vanguard reached Fort Msus and took it. Still the forced march went on across the wasteland which no army had traversed before.

Dash Across the Desert

The advanced column reached the Benghazi road at 12.40 p.m. on







ITALIANS FOUGHT A DELAYING ACTION AT DERNA

The small seaport of Derna, 100 miles W. of Tobruk, was captured by British and Australian troops on Jan. 30 after a four-day battle, in which the enemy fought doggedly to cover the withdrawal of his garrison. Top, a British officer scans the ground ; centre, left, Italian slogan—'Believe, Obey, Fight'—on a Derna building ; right, the green shrubs at Derna were a welcome sight after weeks of arid desert scenery ; below, swift truck transport for our troops.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright





IN THE DERNA AREA

British medium guns are seen above on the way up the escarpment near Giovanni Berta, 20 miles west of Derna. The retreating Italians sowed many minefields, and in the centre photograph British sappers are prodding with metal rods to find them. Below, units of a machine-gun battalion in action outside Derna.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

February 5, and at once sent back word to the main body that traffic was streaming by in both directions, which suggested that the main Italian column had not yet passed. It was, indeed, at 2.20 p.m.—one hour and 40 minutes after the first British armoured cars reached the road—that the Italians appeared in the distance. At once the British tanks swept into action over the sticky, sodden ground, while the artillery pounded the advancing column. As the main British force came up, one group was detached to harass the Italian rear-guard, while another directed its attention to his flanks. The enemy column came to a sudden halt as the first lorry was bowled over by a shell, thus holding up the great mass of vehicles, tanks and lorries, armoured cars, Breda carriers, motor-cycles and civilian buses which stretched down the road for 10 miles. "I cannot believe," said their Commander, General Tallera, as he was carried away mortally wounded, "that the full strength of the British have got here so soon, or that they can have cut our road to the south." But they had, and the Italians, with safety in sight, were forced to stand and fight.





The Italians put up a desperate resistance; they had plenty of guns and armoured vehicles and a superiority of man-power. But by nightfall on February 5 over 40 Italian tanks were out of action, and many Italian field guns had been silenced. The next day the carnage continued. Desperately the Italians strove to break through the iron cordon, but all their efforts were unavailing. Steadily reinforced, the attackers assailed the Italians from the seashore and from the desert at once. One or two tanks did manage to break through along a road that led close to the shore, but to the great majority the line formed by the 2nd Rifle Brigade proved impenetrable. One after the other they were accounted for.

The fight was still going on when February 7 dawned. The Italians made

another desperate attempt to break out, but at 2.20 p.m. it collapsed. Everywhere white handkerchiefs began to appear, and men with their hands raised in surrender emerged from behind the rocks. The elusive Italian general, Berganzoli, was "in the bag"; so, too, were 20,000 of his comrades, with 216 guns, 112 tanks, 1,500 lorries and enormous quantities of other war material. In 62 days, from December 9 to February 8, the number of Italian prisoners taken totalled 133,295.

While Beda Fomm was being fought, the Australians had arrived at Benghazi. At 6 p.m. on February 6 Nicola Epifani, the mayor, drove out to the aerodrome at Benina and handed over to the Australian brigadier the keys of the capital of Cyrenaica, and early on the





THE SURRENDER OF BENGHAZI

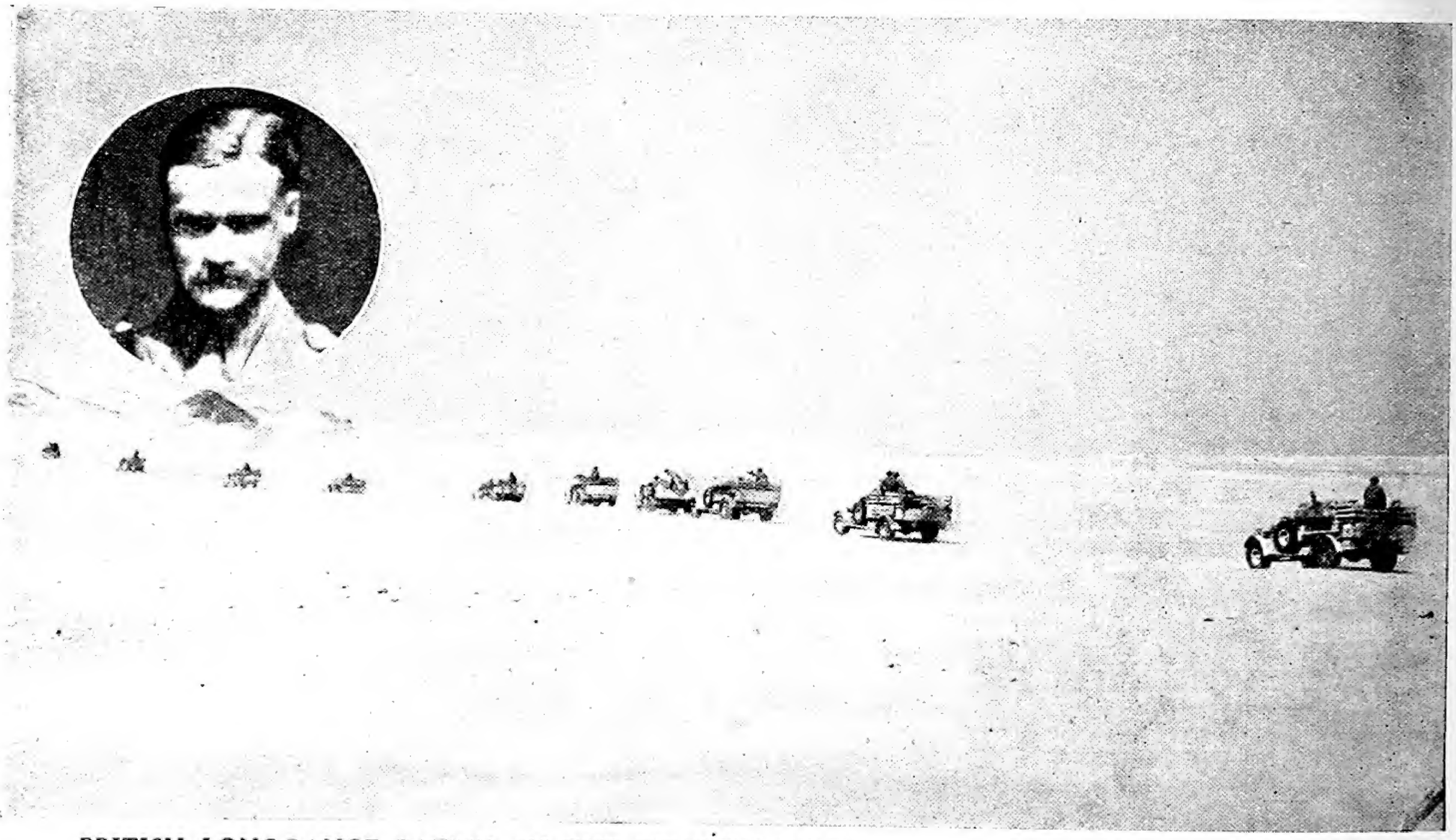
By a master-stroke of interception, involving a 150-mile dash across the desert, Italian forces about to vacate Benghazi were cut off and brought to battle. Swift British victory yielded a prize of 20,000 prisoners. Australian infantry entered Benghazi (lower photograph) on February 7, after its capitulation the night before. Top, Libyans fraternize with the R.A.F.; centre, R.A.F. pilots examine damaged enemy 'planes at Benina airfield

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

next day the Army of the Nile marched in. "In the grey, cold early morning light," wrote Alan Moorhead, The Daily Express staff reporter, who was present, "they got down from their trucks in the streets—just one company—and marched into the square before the Town Hall. They were unkempt, dirty, stained head to foot with mud. They had their steel helmets down over their eyes to break the force of the wind. Some had their hands botched with desert sores, all of them had rents in their greatcoats and webbing. They had fought three battles and a dozen skirmishes. They had lost some of their comrades, dead and wounded, on the way. They had often been hungry, cold and wet through in these two months of campaigning in bitter weather.

. . . The townspeople swarming round the square had half sullenly expected brass bands and a streamlined military parade. Instead, they got this little ragged group of muddy men. They hesitated. Then a wave of clapping broke down from the housetops, along





BRITISH LONG-RANGE PATROL IN THE WESTERN DESERT

By swift advance across the Sahara and Libyan deserts flying columns such as this revolutionized desert warfare ; the column shown was manned by New Zealanders. Only by much research and experiment was it possible to design suitable vehicles for such trying conditions: a pioneer in this development was Lt.-Col. Ralph Bagnold (circle), retired officer of the First Great War, who became leader of the Long Range Desert Group in the Army of the Nile.

By permission of H.M. Stationery Office ; "News Chronicle"

the pavements and across the whole of the massed square. I felt like clapping myself in that one highly charged moment."

At 9 a.m. the Brigadier drove up to the Town Hall, where Mayor Epifani, Bishop Vescovo, and a number of municipal dignitaries, police and Carabinieri were waiting. As the Brigadier alighted the Mayor stepped forward. Through an interpreter the Brigadier issued his orders. "I reappoint you," he said, "and all civil officers in their present positions. You will continue with your normal work. Get your people to reopen their shops and businesses. Your civil guard will act in conjunction with my own garrison troops."

Benghazi is Ours

With the capture of Benghazi the whole of Cyrenaica was in British hands —except for a few isolated posts in the desert to the south, and even these were being mopped up by the patrols of Lt.-Colonel Bagnold's Long Range Desert Group, which invaded the Libyan desert in August, 1940, and steadily increased the extent and scope of their forays until the following March. Most notable of these, perhaps, was the raid on the Italian-occupied Murzuk, chief town in the Fezzan, by Capt. P. A. Clayton and a little force of British Guardsmen and New Zealanders. After a run of 1,100 miles across the desert from Cairo Clayton joined forces with a Free French detachment under Col. D'Ornano at Tibesti on January 7, and together they stormed Murzuk. D'Ornano was killed when, rifle in hand, he charged an enemy machine-gun, and Clayton fell into the hands of the enemy on January 31, when his patrols were attacked near Bishara Well. Eventually the whole Kufra area was subdued by the Free French under Col. Leclerc, the fort surrendering on March 1.

By February 9 General O'Connor's advanced elements had occupied El Agheila, 165 miles west of Benghazi, and this marked the limit of the Army of the Nile's advance. The next day Lt.-Gen. Sir Maitland Wilson, Commander-in-Chief of the conquering army, was appointed Military Governor and General Officer C.-in-C. Cyrenaica. The first Libyan campaign was at an end.

In a broadcast on February 9 Mr. Churchill reviewed a campaign which, he declared, would long be studied as a model of the military art. The whole Italian Army in the East of Libya, reputed to exceed 150,000 men, had been captured or destroyed ; the entire province of Cyrenaica had been conquered. Egypt and the Suez Canal were safe, and the port, base and airfields of Benghazi constituted a strategic point of high consequence to the whole of the war in the Eastern Mediterranean. Then the Premier paid tribute to the leaders who had rendered this distinguished service to the King: to General Wavell, first and foremost, "a master of war—sage, painstaking, daring and tireless"—one of our finest tacticians ; to General O'Connor, commanding the Thirteenth Corps, with General Mackay, commanding the "splendid Australians," and General Creagh, who trained and commanded the various armoured divisions which were employed—"these three men executed the complicated and astoundingly rapid movements which were made, and fought the actions which occurred." The Premier included in his tribute the R.A.F. under Air Chief Marshal Longmore, and the British Mediterranean Fleet under Admiral Cunningham which had chased the Italian Navy into its harbours and "sustained every forward surge of the Army with all the flexible resources of sea power." Together they had achieved a series of victories "which have broken irretrievably the Italian military power on the African continent."

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THE GREEN COUNTRY AROUND DERNA

After the taking of Derna, on January 30, 1941, British and Australian troops pushed on westwards towards Benghazi, through green-clad terrain which proved welcome after weeks of desert warfare. Top, our troops passing over one of the few bridges at Derna left undestroyed by the enemy.

THE HANDING-OVER CEREMONY AT BENGHAZI

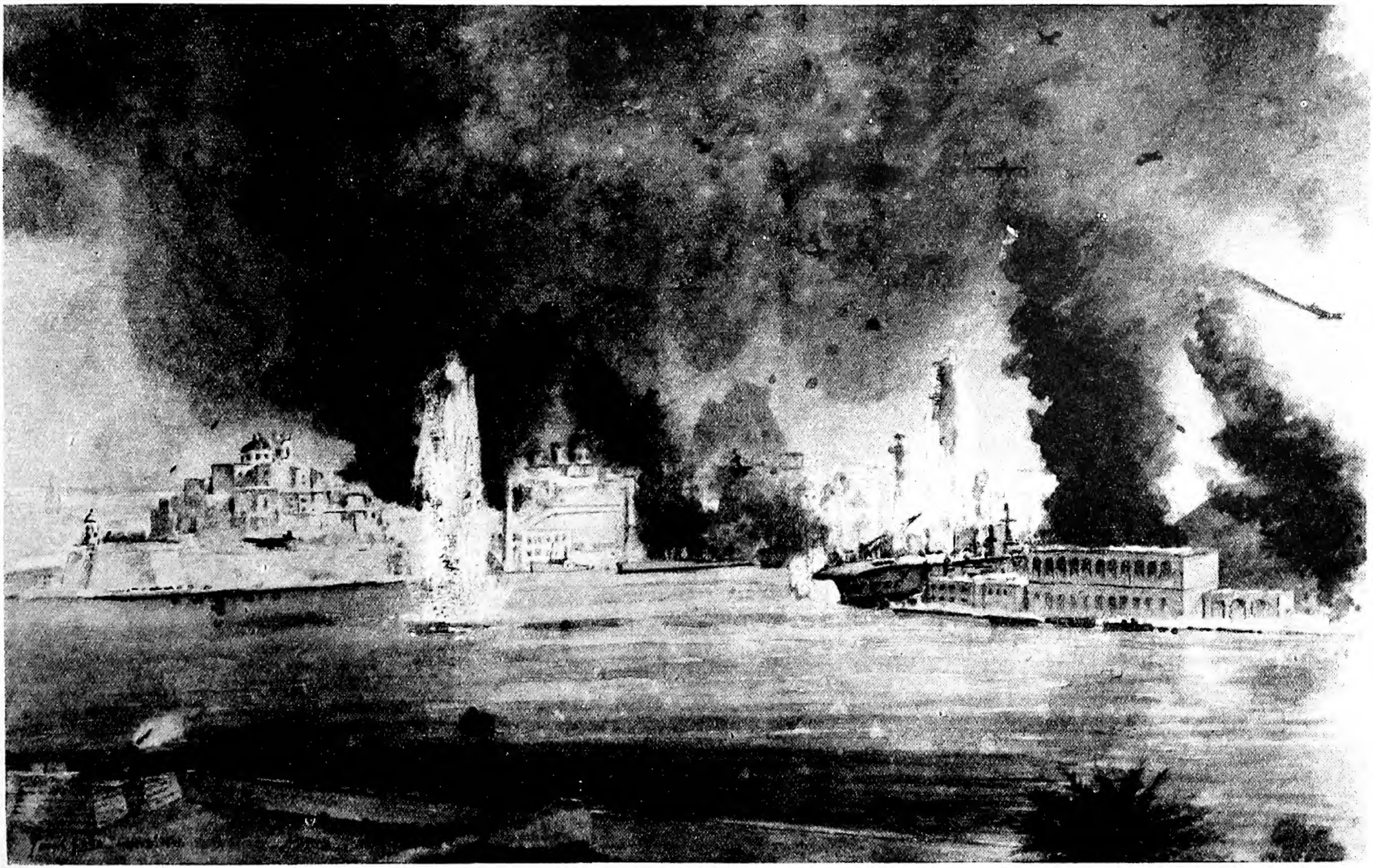
The keys of Benghazi had been given up by the mayor the night before at Benina aerodrome, and in the morning of Feb. 7 the Army of the Nile marched in ; top, the handing-over ceremony, with (centre) Brigadier H. C. H. Robertson of the A.I.F. saluting. Below, General O'Connor, G.O.C. Desert Force, visits Derna after its capture on Jan. 30.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright

ROYAL NAVY TAKES STEADY TOLL OF AXIS SUBMARINES

On March 18, 1941, Mr. Churchill told Parliament that three U-boats had been recently destroyed in a single day. Below, U-boat prisoners on the deck of a British destroyer, which had sunk two of the pirates. Top, depth charges brought this Italian submarine to the surface : the Crew is being rescued by boats from our destroyers standing by.

Photos, Capt. M. Somerset Thomas, R.N.; Associated Press



LAST PHASE OF THE GERMAN ATTACK ON H.M.S. 'ILLUSTRIOUS'

This informative painting by Joseph Galea, a Maltese artist, depicts one of the final attacks by Stukas when the aircraft carrier had reached Malta Harbour. (See photographs of earlier assaults in page 1601.) It was presented to the Captain and officers of H.M.S. 'Illustrious.' Beginning on January 10, 1941, no fewer than six determined dive-bombing attacks were made on the aircraft carrier. Hit repeatedly by heavy bombs, which started fires and put A.A. guns out of action, she was detached from the convoy escort and headed for Malta. Three Stuka attacks were beaten off en route, and she was got safely to port. After repair and refit at an American dockyard, 'Illustrious' took the seas again not long after.

By permission of Allied Malta Newspapers

Chapter 154

OUR WARFARE AT SEA IN THE OPENING MONTHS OF 1941

Our Submarines in the Adriatic—The Sicilian Channel: Story of H.M.S. 'Illustrious'—Bombardment of Genoa—Axis Cruiser off Azores—'Wolf-pack' U-boat Tactics—Combined Operations in Somaliland Offensive—'Scharnhorst' and 'Gneisenau' in the Atlantic—Raid on the Lofotens—Trouble About Vichy Convoys

THE New Year opened with the greatest interest focused on the Mediterranean, where the campaigns in Greece and North Africa were proceeding badly for Italy, largely on account of the work of the Navy and of Hitler's great efforts to starve Britain, for it was obvious that the Germans were trying to make up for the lost opportunity of invasion by redoubled efforts against British supply services. Grand Admiral Raeder spoke of Germany building "the best submarines in the world in an unprecedentedly short time," while Goering broadcast to Italian workers that submarine and aircraft attacks were rapidly beating Britain. But at the end of January, 1941, it was officially demonstrated that Britain's imports of food had greatly increased.

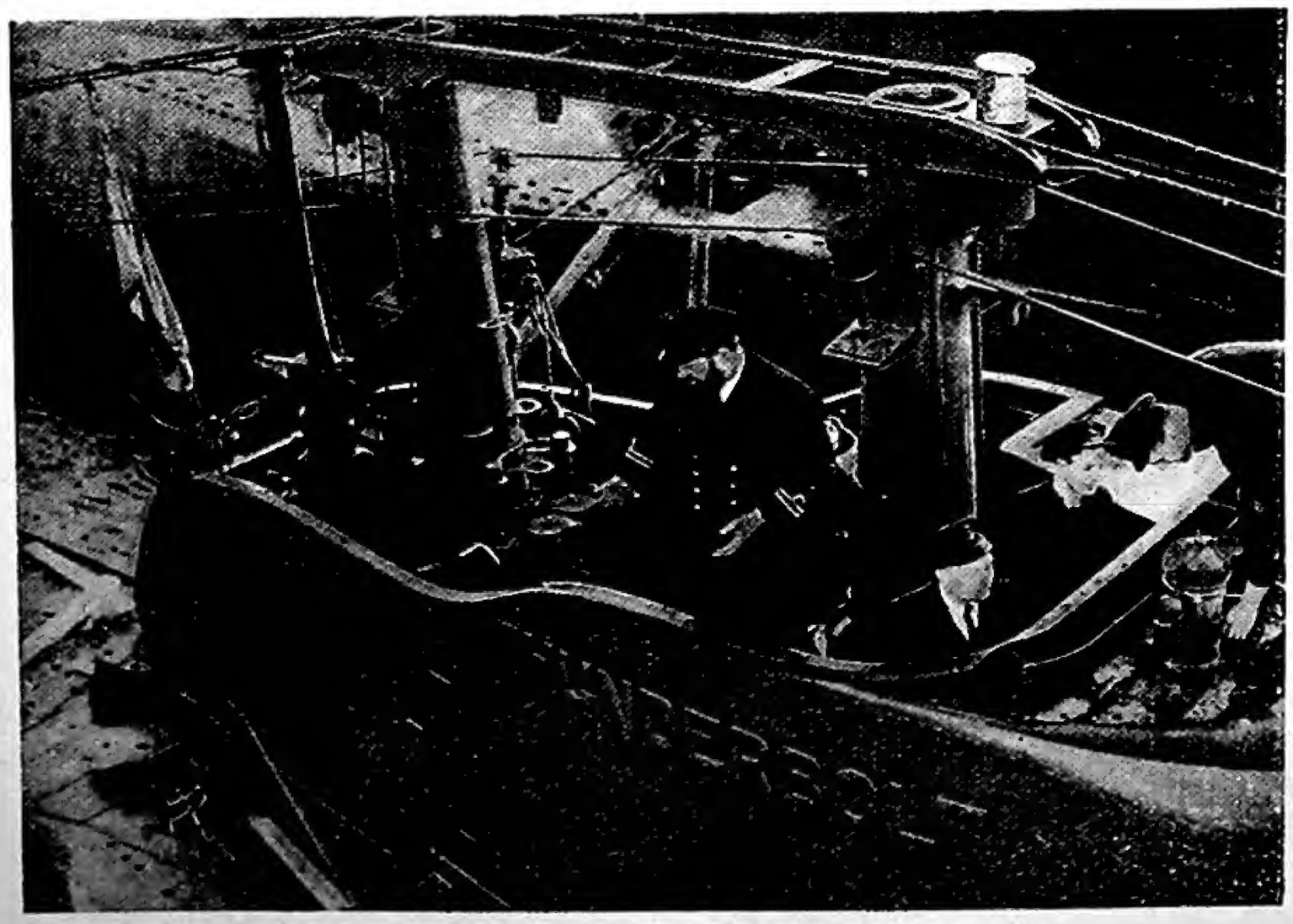
The Greek and Allied Navies carried out particularly dashing and successful operations against Italian supply services in the Adriatic both before and after the signing of the Anglo-Greek Treaty in January, 1941. H.M. submarine "Thunderbolt"—the unlucky "Thetis" which had foundered before the war and after salving had been renamed—sank an Italian submarine, while the Greek submarines "Katsonis," "Proteus," "Papanicolis" and "Nereus" all carried out successful attacks. The "Proteus" sank the transport "Sardegna" (of 11,452 tons), and prisoners later disclosed that other victims had been the "Liguria" (15,354 tons) and "Lombardia" (20,006 tons). In the middle of February Allied submarines were operating as far up the Adriatic as the waters round Trieste, and were causing confusion both among the transports and among ships carrying bauxite up to the Italian armament works. The Greek destroyers, few though they were, also showed great enterprise; on the night of January 5, 1941, some of them went right into Valona, in spite of the heavy fortifications and shelled the town and port at short range before they withdrew without sighting a single enemy warship.

'Thetis' Sails Again

The vastly superior forces being brought against Greece made it necessary to rush all the supplies possible to her aid. There was no time to send munitions by the comparatively safe route round the Cape of Good Hope and up the Red Sea. The Mediterranean passage had to be risked, and the well-protected convoy was naturally a great temptation to the Italian forces. It was attacked in the Sicilian Channel. On January 9 an Italian battleship was sighted at 13 miles, but quickly disappeared. Contact was made on the morning of the 10th with two Italian destroyers; one of them managed to slip away in the morning mist, but the other was soon sunk by British cruisers and destroyers. That was the end of the Italian navy's part.

At 1.30 p.m. the German dive-bombers appeared, and after that they attacked in waves with the greatest determination; H.M. cruiser "Southampton," after beating off several attacks, was hit and set on fire. The munitions carried by the convoy were too valuable to be delayed, so that it was decided that salvage attempts were impracticable. The "Southampton" was accordingly sunk by her own people to prevent her wreck being boarded by the enemy. No other ship was lost, but Rome wireless subsequently claimed sixteen men-of-war damaged or sunk, including two aircraft carriers, two capital ships, three cruisers and other ships. The claim for serious damage was justified only in the case of the new aircraft carrier "Illustrious," whose survival was almost miraculous.

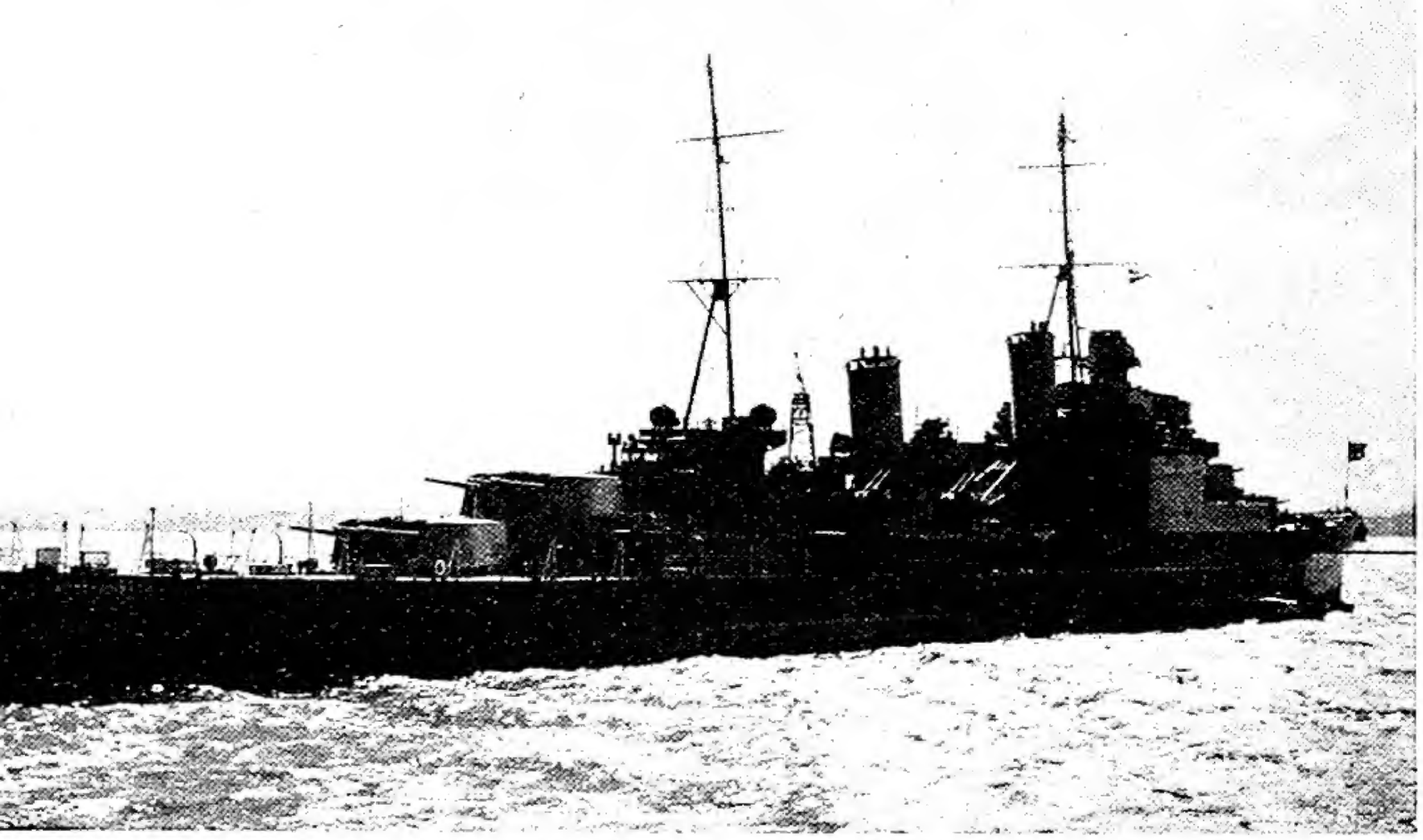
About forty of the dive-bombers had concentrated on the "Illustrious," which dodged them as well as a ship of her size could, maintaining a very heavy anti-aircraft fire and sending up her own fighter 'planes. Several very heavy bombs struck her, putting some



SUNKEN SUBMARINE THAT LIVED AGAIN

H.M.S. 'Thunderbolt' in harbour, with 1st Lieutenant J. Stevens at the controls. On January 3, 1941, it was announced that she had sunk an Italian submarine proceeding under escort to an enemy base. As H.M.S. 'Thetis' she foundered on a trial trip in June, 1939, off Liverpool, despite remarkable attempts at rescue and salvage. Later the ship was raised and recommissioned as 'Thunderbolt.' See badge in page 1454.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



H.M.S. 'SOUTHAMPTON' WAS LOST WHILE DEFENDING CONVOY
On January 10, 1941, Italian warships attacked a British convoy traversing the Sicilian Channel and were beaten off, but German dive-bombers which took up the assault bombed and set on fire the cruiser 'Southampton' (above). Later it became impossible to tow 'Southampton,' and she was sunk by our own forces. *Photo, C. E. Brown*

of the anti-aircraft guns out of action, doing damage below deck, and starting a number of fires. By every accepted canon such explosions should have sunk any aircraft carrier; that they did not was a striking indication of the improvement in design in the later British ships. Fire parties on board extinguished most of the numerous fires which had been started, but one which broke out in a hangar proved very serious.

While the main convoy and its escort proceeded towards the East, the "Illustrious" was detached and headed towards Malta with a destroyer escort. Her steering gear broke down and she had to be steered with her screws. The water pumped on to the fire gave her a heavy list. A third attack was beaten off by the ship's 'planes, the bombs dropping well clear. Fifteen German dive-bombers, protected by fighters, made a fourth attack, but sheered off in face of the ship's fire. Only a few miles off Malta seventeen more aircraft attacked, but she reached port. Nine 'planes had been shot down, five by the carrier's own fighters and four by gunfire, and seven more were observed to be damaged. Subsequent raids while the "Illustrious" was at Malta produced no result.

'Illustrious' Beats Dive-bombers

In the Libyan campaign the Navy constantly bombarded enemy positions and the coastal roads on which communications depended, supplied the Army with water by means of their evaporators, shared their stores when the troops got ahead of supplies and, after Bardia had been captured, maintained and protected the British lines of communication. The Royal Australian Navy took a full part in these operations, a fact which was acknowledged in the official reports.

At the attack on Bardia the Navy's bombardment was particularly effective, big ships and small maintaining a steady fire for an hour and a half. A destroyer slipped into the harbour in the darkness, sank two Italian supply ships and took away a third which had British prisoners on board. Casualties in these operations were extremely few and damage light.

The sensational and highly successful bombardment of the fortified base and port of Genoa on February 9, 1941, was a further handicap to enemy operations in North Africa, for the German Southern Army was in the port awaiting embarkation. At dawn Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville, with his flag flying in the battle cruiser "Renown," led in the battleship "Malaya," the aircraft carrier "Ark Royal" and the cruiser "Sheffield," supported by various types of light craft. The ships approached without encountering any outposts and took the Italians completely by surprise, in spite of a simultaneous Fleet Air Arm attack on Leghorn. They were in position before being challenged by signal lights ashore, and the Italian batteries took a further fifteen minutes to come into action, when their fire was feeble and all their shells fell short. The 15-inch guns of the big ships, with the "Renown's" secondary armament and the "Sheffield's" 6-inchers, bombarded the Ansaldo works, power station, oil-fuel depot and dry docks, the fire of the big guns being largely concentrated on the quays and basins where the transports were being loaded. With aircraft from the "Ark Royal" spotting, a very accurate fire was maintained and 300 tons of shells were thrown into the town before our warships withdrew, without having sustained a single hit and losing only one 'plane.

The enemy press declared the operation to be "an aggression against an open city," and excused their own naval inactivity by the fact that the Italian fleet was cruising in the Sicilian Channel "looking for the British." Actually the only enemy battleship sighted by Admiral Cunningham on that day fled immediately. Later reports from neutral sources stated that the bombardment was followed by serious riots among the civil population. Constant British attacks on their supply line across the central Mediterranean gave the enemy further embarrassment. In addition to the Fleet Air Arm, the submarines "Pandora," "Parthian," "Upholder," "Rover," "Utmost," "Truant" and "Triton" were particularly mentioned as scoring successes, although the last-named became a casualty. Even Mussolini, addressing a Fascist rally, admitted the heavy losses.

At this period, too, the British Navy had to take due precautions in the Pacific, where Japan, without fully declaring her intentions, was becoming more and more unfriendly and showing constant signs of creeping down towards the south. Enemy raiders were active against Allied commerce.

Raiders were also busy in other waters. On February 5, 1941, Berlin

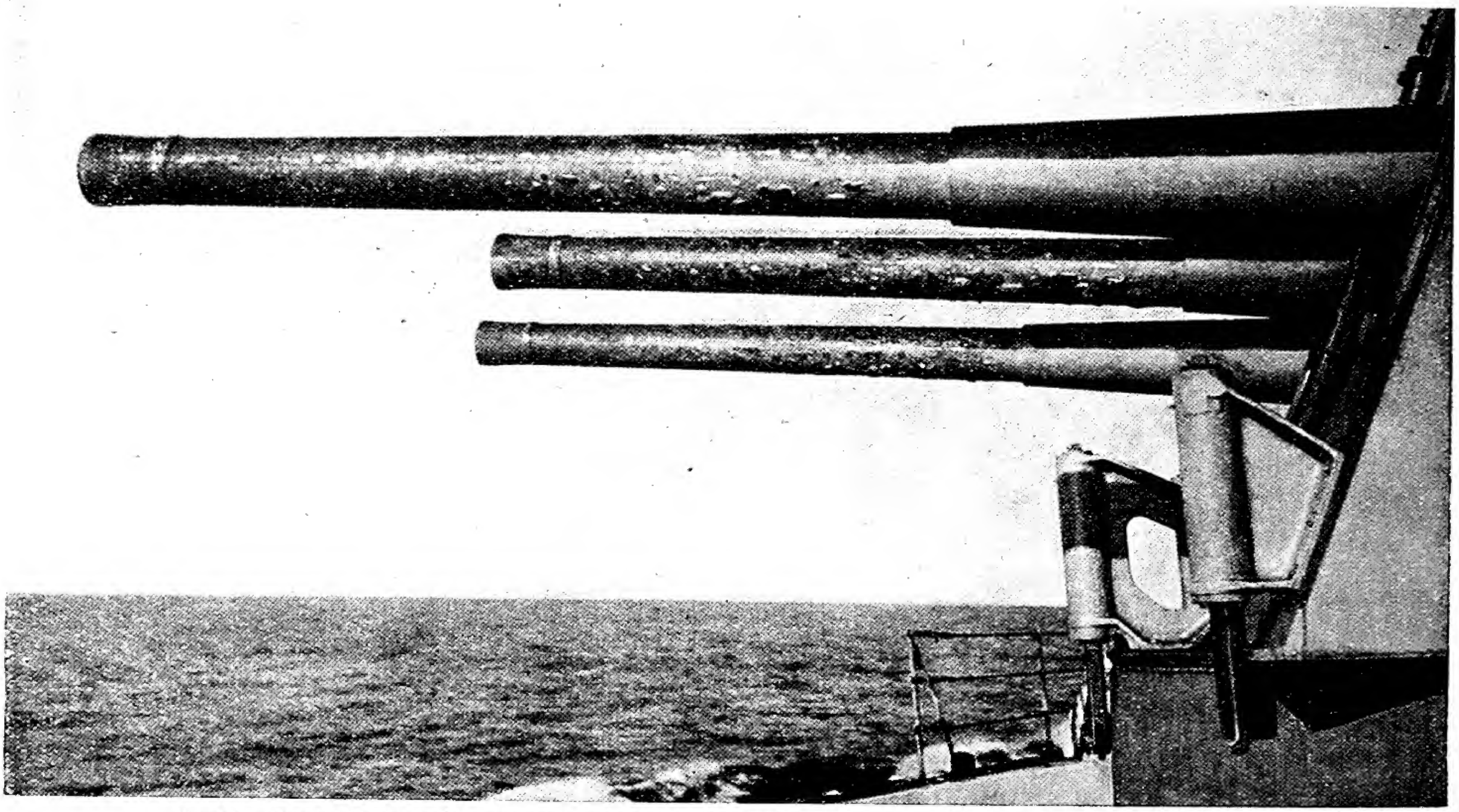


C.-IN-C. WESTERN APPROACHES
In the middle of March, 1941, Admiral Sir Percy Noble, formerly in command of the China Station, was appointed to the key post in the Battle of the Atlantic—a battle, as Mr. Churchill said, which "we must regard as one of the most momentous ever fought." *Photo, Central Press*

'ILLUSTRIOUS' BATTLES FOR HER LIFE

During the action of January 10, in the Sicilian Channel, forty dive-bombers attacked and set on fire the aircraft carrier 'Illustrious'; headed for Malta, she was again attacked from the air repeatedly, but though damaged she reached port. Incidents in her battle are shown: top, straddled with bombs; left, a near miss close to the bows; lower, left, another near miss and a hit; bottom, in the thick of the fight. Right, centre, the 'Illustrious' as Lord Louis Mountbatten took over command, after repair in an American shipyard.

Photos, British Official; Planet News; Keystone



GUNS WHICH RAINED SHELL UPON GENOA

At dawn on Sunday, February 9, 1941, the 'Renown,' 'Malaya,' 'Ark Royal' and 'Sheffield' approached Genoa. Aircraft from 'Ark Royal' spotted for the naval guns, which fired 300 tons of shell upon the port and base. These three six-inchers of the cruiser 'Sheffield' in one of her four triple turrets fired over 200 rounds in less than half an hour, and their barrels were blistered by the heat.

Photo, Fox

claimed that an overseas raider had reported that she had sunk 40,000 tons more Allied shipping, making 110,000 tons in the course of her cruise. On February 12 an enemy heavy cruiser attacked a convoy of nineteen ships off the Azores and contrived to do a certain amount of damage, although not nearly as much as was claimed.

This raider, believed to have been the 10,000-ton 8-inch-gun cruiser "Admiral Hipper," had apparently closed with the convoy in the darkness of the early morning of February 12, falling into station and not being suspected. In the dawn mist she suddenly opened fire with her main and secondary armament and kept it up for half an hour, when she disappeared at a speed which left no hope of catching her. The heavy sea running made it very difficult to use lifeboats, many of which had been smashed by the hail of shells, but every effort was made and one British ship in particular distinguished herself by turning back in the middle of the action and saving 84 lives. Despite German claims that only one ship of the convoy escaped, the fact was that out of nineteen ships eleven reached port safely (one a fortnight later).

The Nazi submarine campaign went on, Germany officially announcing on February 23, 1941, that a specially big offensive would start in March and Hitler confirming this on the following day. Two days later the German military spokesman described the new "wolf-pack" system of attack, for which most successful results were claimed. Part of the enemy technique was the sending out of false wireless messages. Thus the Canadian Pacific "Empress of Australia" was alleged to have sent out a "lastmessage"—that she had been sunk by a submarine—at a time when she was safe in port.

British casualties included the auxiliary cruiser "Crispin"; the submarines "Regulus" and "Triton," overdue and presumed lost; the destroyer "Hyperion," which was so badly damaged that she was sunk by the British after her people had been taken off; and several trawlers and drifters.

All the Dominions were building up their own navies at a most satisfactory speed, and Dominion-built small craft were also being delivered to the Royal Navy. In the middle of February, 1941, it was announced that the Canadian Navy had been increased from 55 ships with 5,110 officers and men at the outbreak of war to 155 ships and 14,850 officers and men. These Dominion ships, and those built in British yards, were mostly used for minesweeping and hunting submarines, overcoming the shortage caused by the collapse of the French Navy, and also for maintaining the blockade which was exerting invaluable pressure on the enemy in spite of Nazi conquests in Europe.

Naval interest in March was again centred principally on the Mediterranean, but the affairs of North Africa, owing to the rapid Axis counter-attack, tended to eclipse the operations round Greece.

North African Convoys

In the Central Mediterranean the Navy had to check the passage of enemy transports and storeships to North Africa and at the same time secure the passage of our own convoys to Greece, whose needs were still very great. The Italians claimed that their navy had escorted an entire German Army corps to North Africa, which was unfortunately true, but Berlin announced that German naval personnel had been sent to Italy in order to strengthen Italian morale.

British submarines were very active. Three transports, a 6,000-ton troopship and a 10,000-ton tanker made up the bag of three of them. Another torpedoed and sank an Italian cruiser of the first "Condottieri" class, a ship of 5,069 tons, although she was under the escort

of two destroyers, the escort picking up a large number of survivors.

The convoys to Greece continued uninterrupted, no enemy surface forces being seen, and the comparatively few air attacks made being practically all by the Germans. During these operations it was announced for the first time that H.M. aircraft carrier "Formidable," an improved "Ark Royal," had been completed and was doing useful work.

'Formidable' Active in Mediterranean

In the course of the Aegean operations the Greek hospital ship "Socrates," plainly marked and full of wounded, was deliberately subjected to a low-level attack by an enemy bomber off Lefkas, three bombs causing splinter damage. A few days later there was great indignation in Italy when two British torpedo 'planes scored hits on the Italian liner "Po," which they claimed to be a hospital ship, off Valona. Countess Ciano, Mussolini's daughter, was on board as a volunteer nurse, and was afterwards decorated for her gallantry when the ship sank rapidly.

The Navy also had a considerable part in the operations in East Africa. Italian destroyers and submarines were surprisingly ineffective against British supply services in the Red Sea. On the other hand, the ports of Massawa, Mogadishu and Kismayu proved exceedingly useful bases for enemy commerce destroyers, and the British combined operations were planned largely to put these bases out of action.

An Admiralty communiqué of March 7 described the combined operations on the Somaliland coast which had started in February. The naval bombardment, in which H.M. County cruiser "Shropshire," with her eight 8-inch guns, was conspicuous, did excellent work, especially in dispersing military concentrations in the Brava area and sinking the 6,861-ton Italian tanker "Pennsylvania" in Mogadishu. Berbera, the capital of British Somaliland, was recaptured in these operations. The warships and convoyed transports approached on a calm night, with clouds obscuring the moon, and a small party which marked the landing places was undetected by the Italians. Accurate fire by the ships soon silenced the shore batteries, after which the troops were landed in two parties and most of the defenders fled into the interior.

Two enemy ships were caught. On March 9 the Admiralty reported that H.M. cruiser "Leander," of the New Zealand Squadron, had intercepted the Italian converted raider "R.A.M.B. 1," an 18½-knot Italian Government banana ship of 3,667 tons which was flying the Red Ensign when challenged. She opened fire with her 4.7-inch guns, but the "Leander," with only five 6-inch salvoes, set her blazing. The Italian flag was hauled down and 11 officers and 89 men were saved as prisoners. Later the German liner "Oder" attempted to escape from Massawa, but was captured by the sloop "Shoreham."

The Germans made all the capital that they could out of their attacks on shipping in the Atlantic. The Prime Minister announced that the "Scharnhorst" and "Gneisenau," battleships of 26,000 tons mounting nine 11-inch guns, with a speed of 27 knots and very thick armour, had been operating west of the 42nd meridian, and on March 24 the German wireless gave a highly coloured version of their operations, saying that heavy British forces, including a battleship of the "Malaya" class, had followed a battleship squadron operating against commerce in the Atlantic for two days. A battleship of the "Nelson" class was also mentioned.

What actually happened was that the aircraft carrier "Ark Royal" and the battle cruiser "Renown" were on patrol, Vice-Admiral Somerville flying his flag in the "Renown." The "Ark Royal" had some of her 'planes up and they reported two suspicious-looking merchant ships, which turned out to be the Norwegian tanker "Bianca" and the British tanker "San Casimiro," with German prize crews on board. As soon as the "Renown" was sighted the Germans started to scuttle them, but all hands were saved.

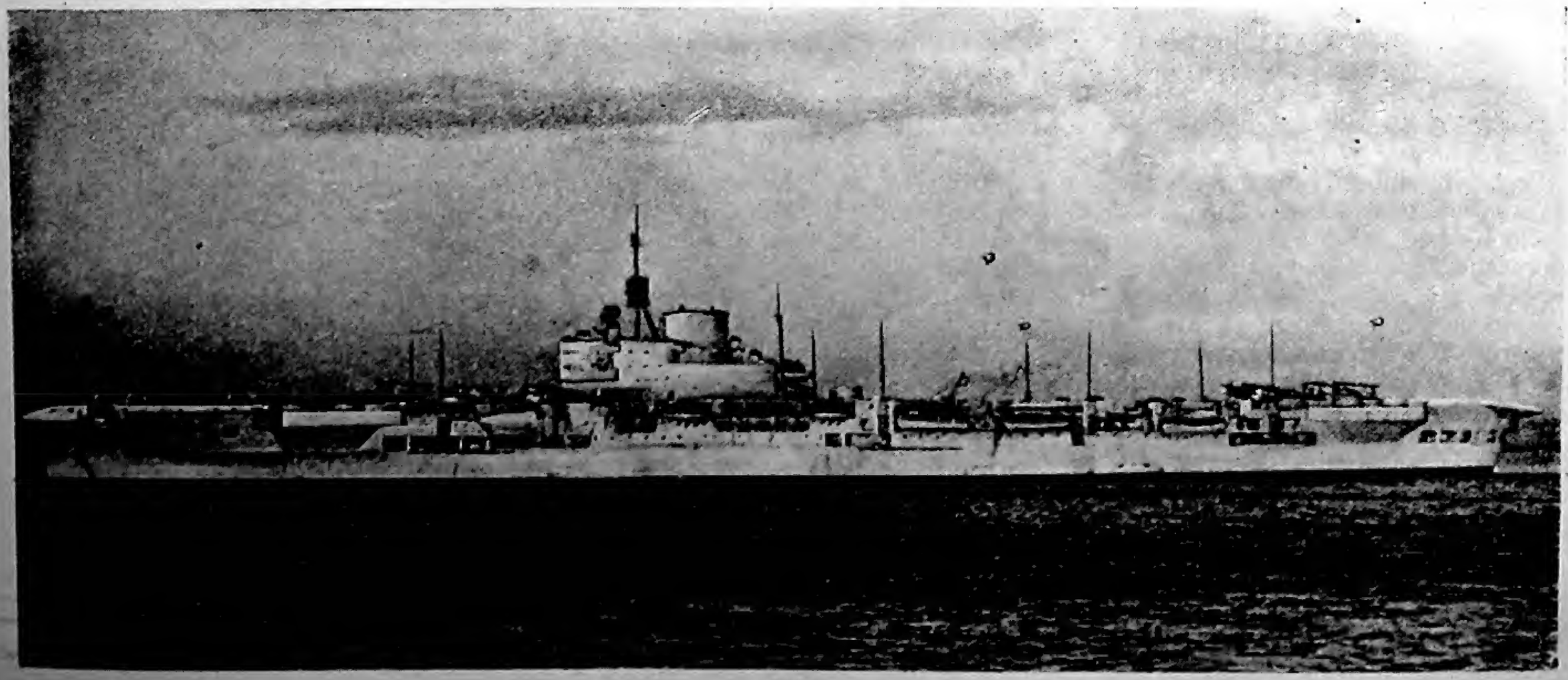
'Scharnhorst' and 'Gneisenau'

Then a Fulmar fighter, whose wireless had broken down, sighted the "Scharnhorst" and the "Gneisenau." Being unable to communicate with the flag, they had to return to report verbally, and immediately took off in a new 'plane in the direction that the enemy had last been sighted. The two big ships followed, with a gale getting up and dusk falling, but the "Scharnhorst" and "Gneisenau"

DECISIVE ROLE OF THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER

Aircraft from H.M.S. 'Formidable' (below) torpedoed the Italian battleship 'Vittorio Veneto' early in the battle of Cape Matapan (March 27–29, 1941), slowing down the big ship and causing the enemy to turn away; other naval aircraft disabled the enemy cruiser 'Pola.' These attacks influenced the whole subsequent course of the battle, and contributed much to the enemy defeat.

Photo, Central Press







NAVY'S PART IN RECAPTURE OF BERBERA

Berbera was retaken by a combined operation on March 17, 1941. Naval advance parties marked out landing places ; then, while it was still dark, our guns silenced the Italian defences. Finally troops landed, and soon Berbera was once again in British hands. Above, during the bombardment ; right, a landing party of bluejackets.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright

had obviously guessed that they had been seen, changed course, and ran for Brest at full speed. There they were the target of British air attack for a considerable time afterwards, one of the first attacks immobilizing them.

Germany announced at this time that Iceland was included in the war zone for their submarines and admitted to the United States that they were sinking on sight without ascertaining the identity of ships.

On the 18th it was announced that the Admiralty had received information of the sinking of three German submarines, and on the 20th the enemy launched a counter-blast with the claim that U-boats had sunk 59,500 tons of British shipping in a convoy. Admiral Sir Percy Noble, a flag officer with a very high reputation, was made Commander-in-Chief of the Western Approaches, with the special responsibility of checking submarine activities.

Anti-Submarine Successes

Off the Norwegian coast the Navy and Royal Air Force continued to harry enemy communications, one of the best prizes being a big enemy tanker torpedoed by H.M. submarine " Sturgeon." The greatest excitement, however, was caused by a daring raid on the Lofoten Islands (March 4) by light naval forces and the Commando troops whose existence had been widely rumoured for some time, in spite of efforts to maintain secrecy. This is described in a later Chapter.

The situation of the Vichy Government continued to be very unhappy in their attempt to make the best of their bargain with the Germans, and relations with Britain became strained. The authorities officially denied reports that they had put naval and air bases at the disposal of Germany, and announced that the African Empire would be defended against all aggressors in conformity with the Armistice terms, but the enemy made the most of the opportunity to stir up feeling against Britain on account of the blockade. On March 5 Vichy reported that eight French ships had been lost in February, six seized by the British, one sunk by a German torpedo 'plane, and one torpedoed by an unidentified submarine. Others had been stopped by the British Navy, but allowed to proceed. Nothing was said concerning the 250,000 tons of British, Allied, and chartered neutral tonnage which had been detained in French ports at the time of the surrender and which had not been released according to their promise. There was evidence that a very large part of it, at least, had been put on German service.

Admiral Darlan, who had become violently anti-British, proposed that French food ships should be convoyed by their navy, but the plan was announced on the German-controlled Paris radio the day before he made the suggestion.

On March 30 a French convoy of four merchant ships, protected by the destroyer " Simoun," was making for Southern France from the African colonies when British naval forces, on definite information that it was carrying war material destined for Germany, were ordered to intercept it. The convoy passed through the Straits of Gibraltar within Spanish territorial waters, but as soon as it left their protection the British ships closed and called upon the ships to stop for legal search. Shore batteries opened fire on the warships, which were forced to reply in self-defence, although they refrained from sinking the merchant ships as they were legally entitled to do in face of this attack, and the convoy fled into the Algerian port of Nemours while French 'planes unsuccessfully attacked the British force on its way to Gibraltar.

British naval casualties during the whole month had been very light. The Admiralty announced the loss of the auxiliary cruiser " Manistee," the destroyer " Dainty," the submarine " Snapper," six trawlers and two armed yachts, including the Canadian " Otter," which was lost by fire off the Nova Scotian coast. The enemy, however, made very extravagant claims. When he presented the token estimates at the beginning of the month the First Lord had pointed out that, taking enemy official communiqués only, they made out that the Navy had lost roughly twice the number of capital ships, aircraft carriers and cruisers than it had at the outbreak of war and more than all the submarines.

Light British Casualties

Chapter 155

VICTORY OF CAPE MATAPAN, MARCH 28, 1941

Italian Fleet Puts to Sea—Threat to British Convoys—Pridham-Wippell's Light Forces Make Contact With the Enemy—A Decoying Move—'Formidable's' Torpedo-planes Attack 'Vittorio Veneto'—Cruiser 'Pola' Disabled—Fateful Night Action: Two Enemy Cruisers and Three Destroyers Sunk—Finishing Off the 'Pola'

At the end of March 1941 Admiral Cunningham's main Mediterranean Fleet gained one of the most striking and complete victories of modern times off Cape Matapan. The Italian fleet, consisting of three battleships, nine cruisers and fourteen destroyers, was at sea, apparently on account of the strong pressure of the Germans in Italy, and was in two divisions heading east towards Crete, one steaming about fifty miles to the north of the other. The northern force consisted of two reconstructed battleships of the "Cavour" class, three cruisers and four destroyers; the southern division, under the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Riccordi, consisted of the flagship "Vittorio Veneto," six cruisers and destroyers. It was sailing under orders to intercept and destroy a British convoy reported to be on the way to Greece with supplies.

At Alexandria Admiral Cunningham had with him his flagship, the "Warspite," her sisters "Valiant" and "Barham," the new aircraft carrier "Formidable," and a force of destroyers including the Australian flotilla leader "Stuart." South of Crete was a light force under Vice-Admiral H. D. Pridham-Wippell with his flag in the "Orion," having with him the cruisers "Ajax," "Perth" (R.A.N.) and "Gloucester" and a number of destroyers. Their standing orders were to prevent any interference with the munitions lane to Greece.

The first report that the Italians were at sea came from a Sunderland flying boat of the R.A.F. on patrol on March 27. She reported the ships off Cape Passaro, and as soon as the news was received Admiral Cunningham raised steam and left Alexandria.

At 7.49 a.m. on the 28th reconnaissance aircraft reported the southern Italian force 35 miles south of Gavdo Island, Crete, steering south-east. The "Orion" and her squadron were then about 40 miles south-east of the enemy, and the main fleet about 95 miles south-east of them, steering north-west.

The light force under the "Orion" first made contact with the "Vittorio Veneto" and the rest of the southern force, and turned 16 points to lure them towards the main fleet coming up from the south-east. They contrived to keep the range open, but were subjected to a heavy fire from the 15-inch guns of the "Vittorio Veneto" at about 13 miles' range. They escaped injury, although many of the salvoes fell very close. A little before noon the first torpedo attack was delivered by aircraft launched from the "Formidable," whereupon the Italian forces promptly turned 16 points and made off to the north-west. The "Orion" and her consorts lost touch for a time and joined up with the battleship force. Altogether, the "Formidable's" 'planes made three attacks in formation, assisted by the R.A.F., while reconnaissance aircraft were at work all the time and gave accurate information concerning the Italians' movements. At least one direct torpedo hit was scored on the "Vittorio Veneto," which was seen with volumes of smoke coming from her midship section and steaming towards Italy at about 15 knots. Just before dark another hit was claimed.

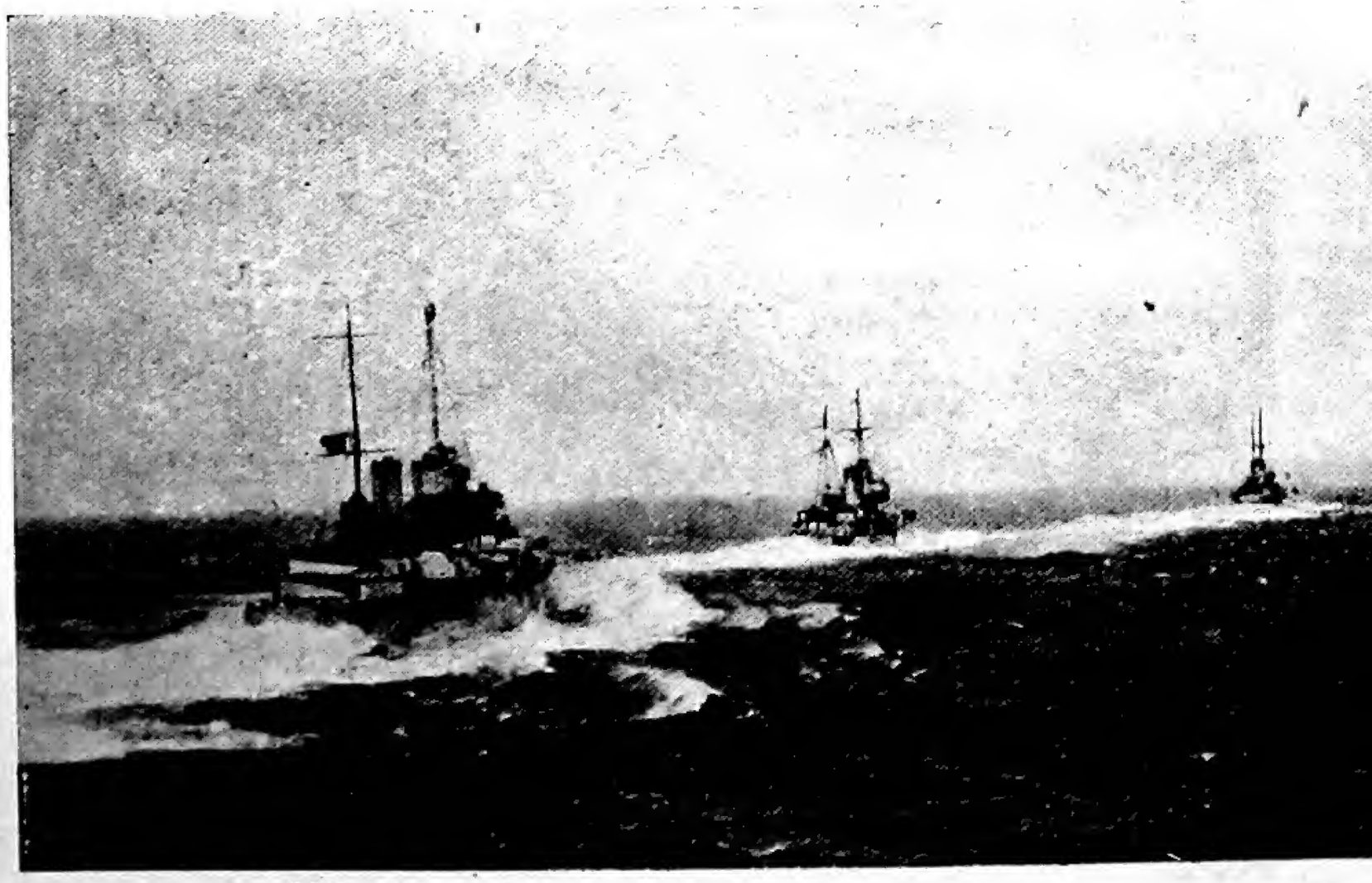
The 10,000-ton cruiser "Pola" was also hit by an air-dropped torpedo in the engine-room, leaving her helpless and, incidentally, disabling the only means of training her turrets so that they were fixed fore and aft and useless. The designers of these ships had already been blamed for saving weight far too drastically for the sake of extra speed, eliminating the alternative gear that would have permitted her to put up a fight against cruisers and destroyers, even if she could not steam away.

The "Pola," like the "Zara" and "Fiume"—two other cruisers of the same class also lost in this striking victory—had an armament of eight 8-inch guns with 12 A.A. guns of 3.9-inch calibre. None of the three ships was provided with torpedo tubes. "Pola" and "Zara" on trials had attained a speed of 34 knots, while the "Fiume" made one knot less. It was the disablement of the "Pola" which led to the second action and the destruction of the Italian ships. Somewhat belatedly, it would appear, the remaining cruisers and destroyers were

CRUISERS OF PRIDHAM-WIPPELL'S LIGHT FORCE

Here, in line astern, are three of the six-inch-gun cruisers which formed the spearhead of Vice-Admiral H. D. Pridham-Wippell's force (VALF) at the battle of Cape Matapan: 'Perth' (Royal Australian Navy), 'Orion' (flagship), and 'Ajax.' See plan in page 1606.

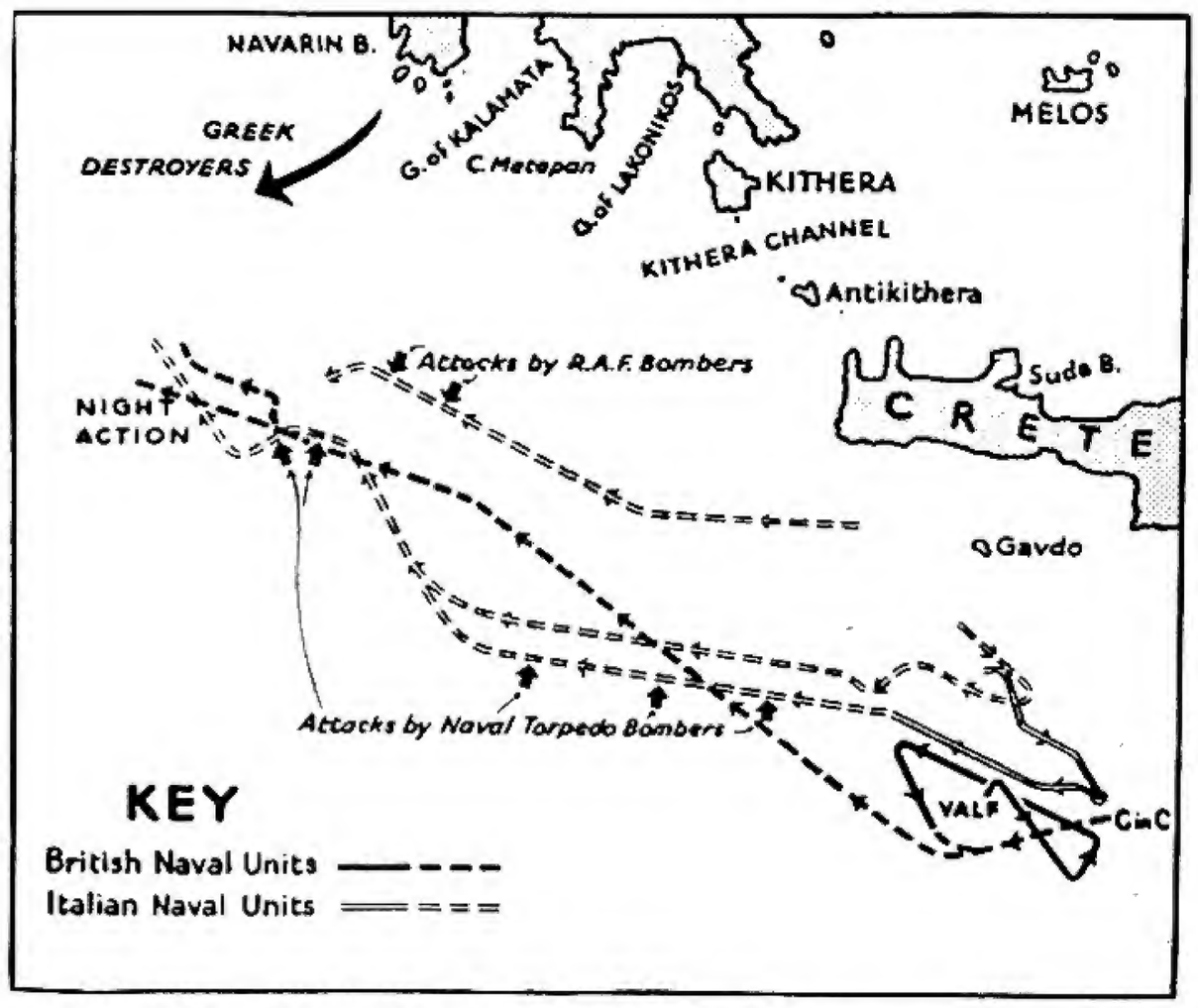
Photo, "News Chronicle"



ordered to go to her assistance. At 10.26 p.m., on a moonless night with a flat calm, the "Barham," with the destroyer "Greyhound" in company, was steaming along with the other battleships away on her quarter in such a way that their search would cover the greatest breadth. She was suddenly challenged by a cruiser, which turned out to be the "Pola," on the port bow, and was obviously mistaken for the other Italian cruisers coming to her assistance.

At the same time the "Barham's" look-outs sighted three cruisers and a number of destroyers in the darkness on the starboard bow, and altered course to meet them. At exactly the right moment the "Greyhound" switched her searchlights on to the third ship of the line, the 10,000-ton cruiser "Fiume," which had not even time to train her turrets before she was overwhelmed by 15-inch salvoes at about 4,000 yards range. The first blew her after turret bodily into the water; the second set her ablaze from the forward funnel to the stern. Afterwards, an Italian war correspondent on board stated that it was at that moment that he tore up the sketches that he was doing of British ships sinking.

The "Valiant" and "Warspite" joined the "Barham," and the 10,000-ton "Zara," flying the flag of Admiral Contani, was treated in similar fashion,



BATTLE OF CAPE MATAPAN, MARCH 28, 1941

This Admiralty plan shows the movements of the opposing fleets. About 8 a.m. on the 28th Vice-Admiral of Light Forces (VALF) made contact with enemy forces S. of Gavdo Island; he thereupon turned his cruisers N.E. in order to decoy the enemy towards the battleships of the British Commander-in-Chief (C.-in-C.). Course of VALF shown in solid line.

British Official: Crown Copyright

bursting into flames under the 15-inch broadsides at short range. The decisive action on the part of the battleships was timed and lasted exactly 4 mins. 6 secs.

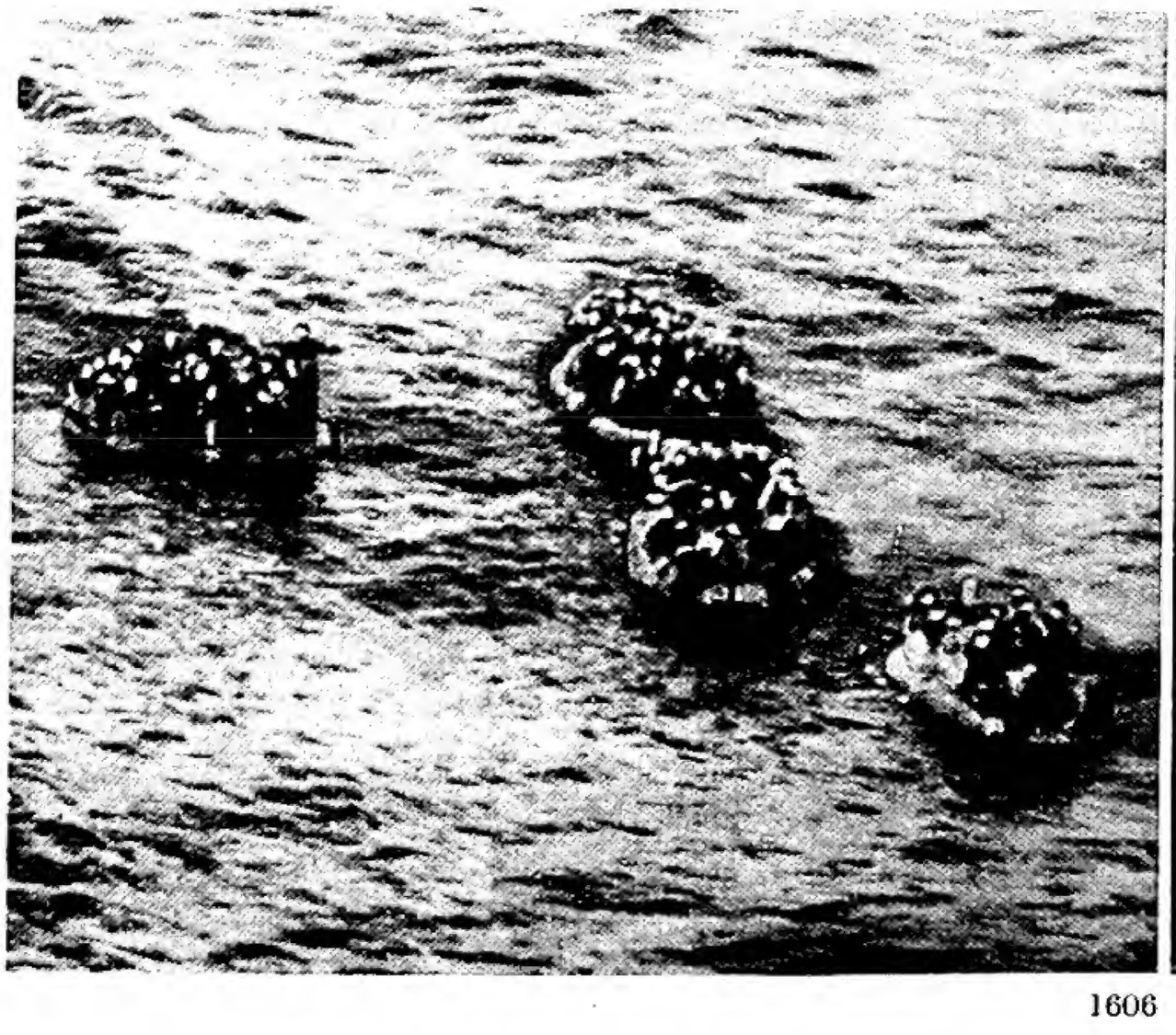
The battleships were then in an ideal position for an Italian torpedo attack and their destroyers took advantage of it, but the torpedoes were seen and the big ships took avoiding action, at the same time opening a very rapid fire with their 6-inch guns, which sank the "Vincenzo Gioberti," "Maestrale" and "Alfieri." The last-named had the whole of her stern, with the guns and steering gear, destroyed by the first salvo, which caused heavy casualties. Out of control, she raced round in circles and her captain gave the order "sauve qui peut" just before another salvo blew the bridge to pieces and she sank by the stern.

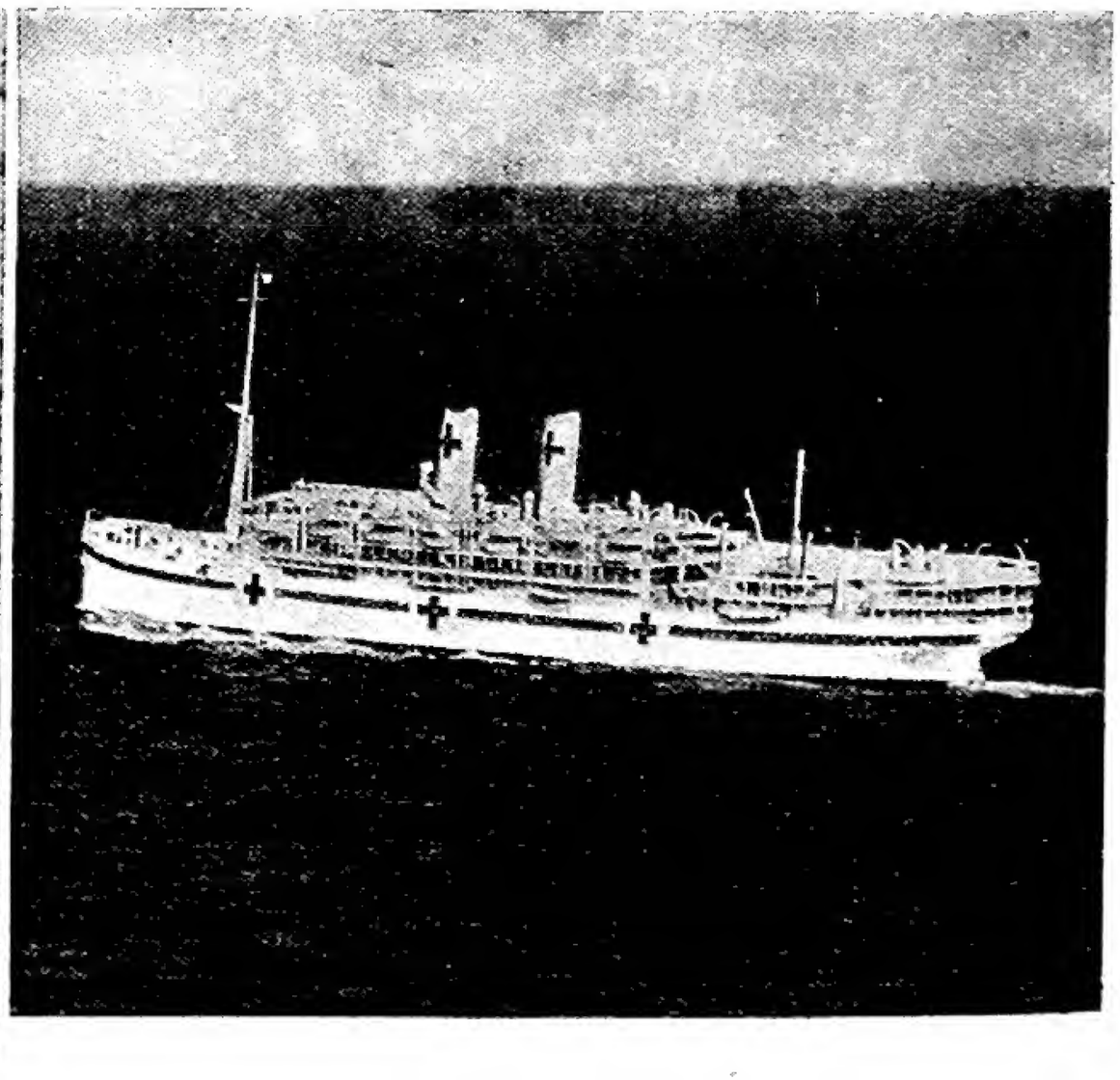
Attention was then paid to the disabled "Pola," lying helpless with her turrets locked. Her flag was not struck, but a white sheet was exhibited over the quarter-deck rail and her crew were drawn up. H.M.S. destroyer "Havock," of Narvik fame, signalled the flagship: "Am hanging on to the stern of the 'Pola.' Shall I board her or destroy her with depth charges as I have no torpedoes left?" H.M.S. "Jervis" was ordered to finish her off; first she went alongside and took off 21 officers and 236 ratings and then she torpedoed her. The blazing "Zara" was also finished off with four torpedoes from the "Jervis." Greek destroyers

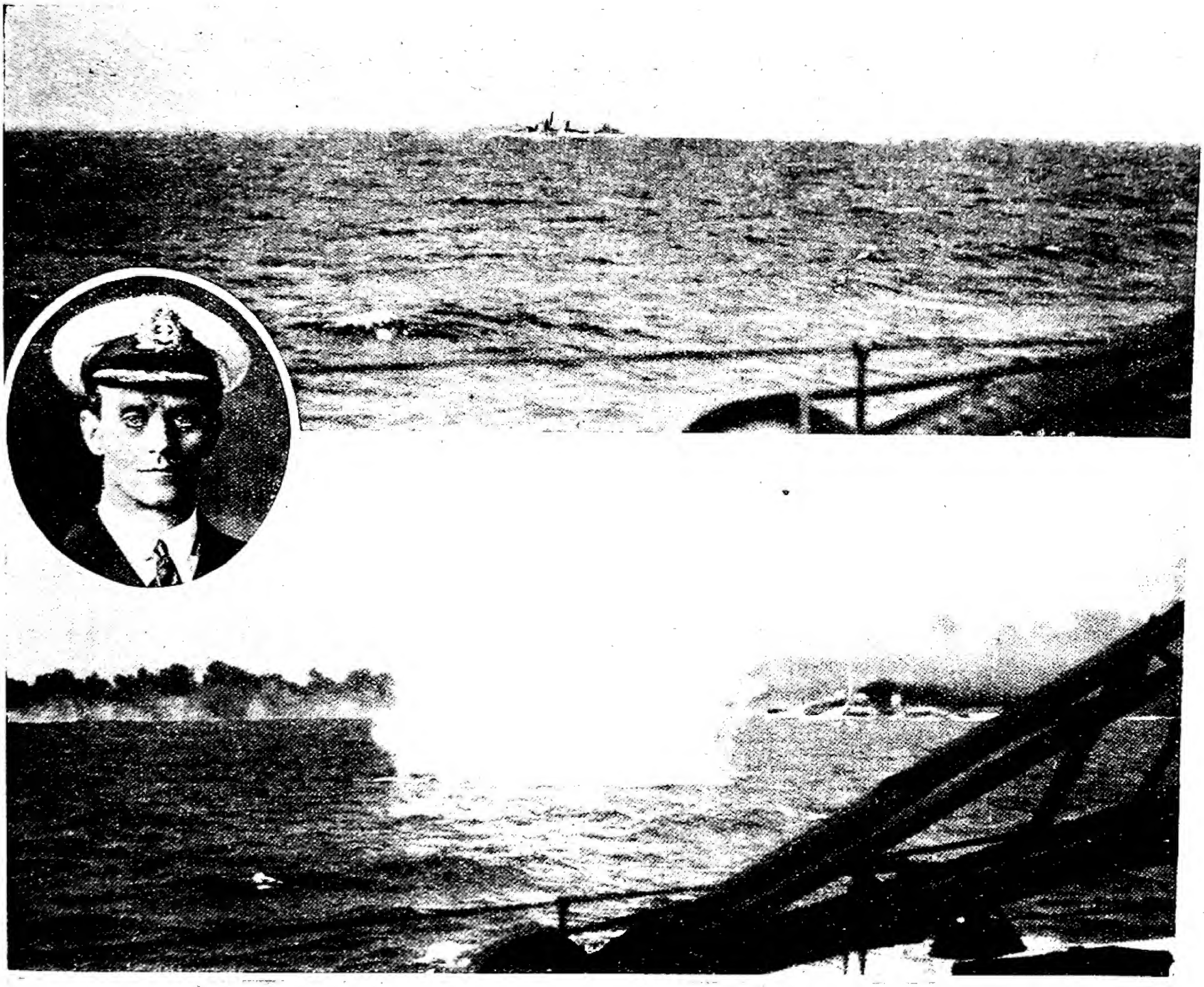
GERMAN BOMBERS PREVENTED RESCUE OF ITALIANS

Seen from a British flying boat, these Italian survivors of the Matapan engagement were picked up by our naval vessels. Owing to attacks by German dive-bombers rescue work had to be stopped, but our C.-in-C. wirelessed *en clair* to the Italian Chief of Naval Staff, giving the position of survivors, and as a result the Italian hospital ship 'Gradista' (right) proceeded to the spot.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

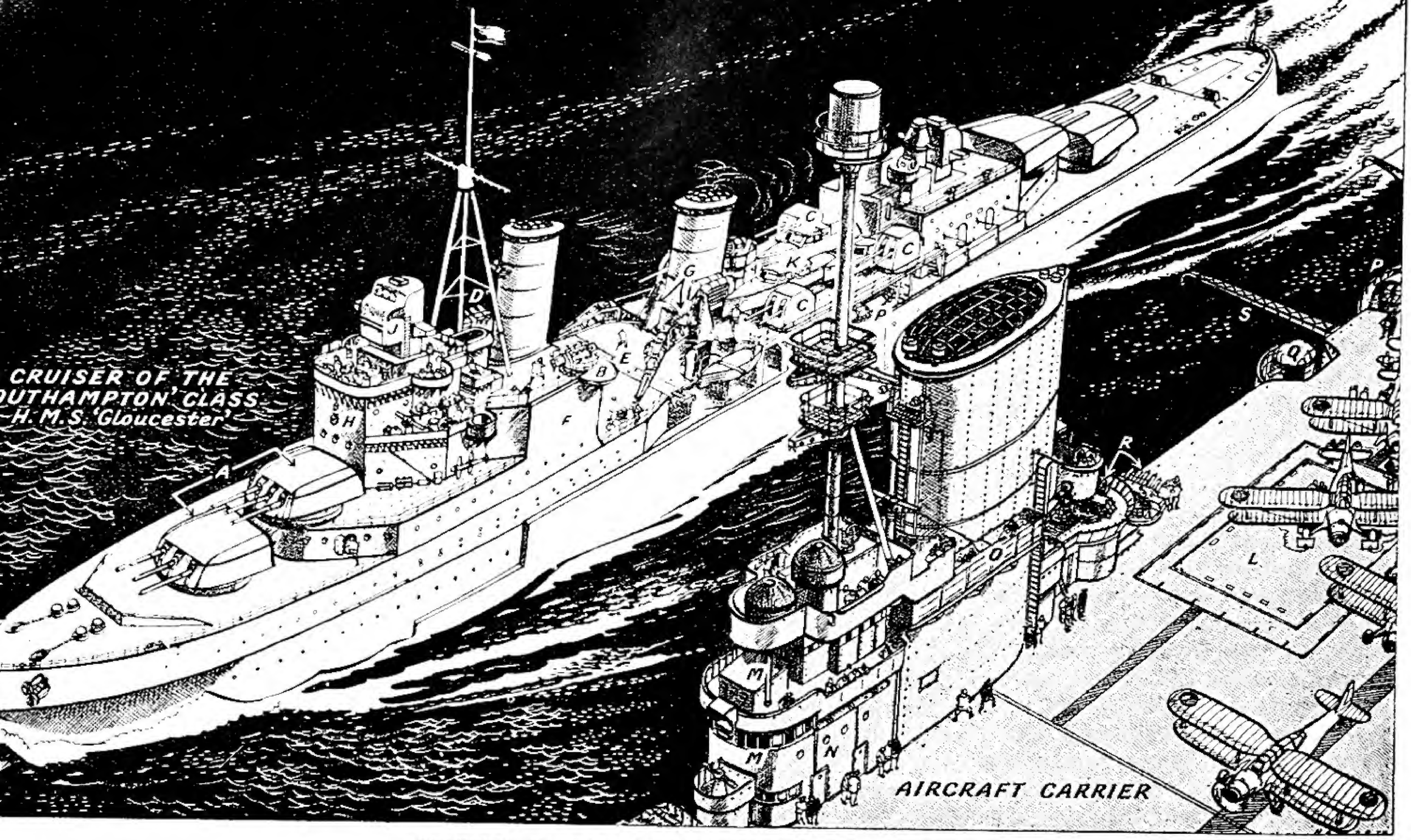






ACTION PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MATAPAN BATTLE

Vice-Admiral H. D. Pridham-Wippell (inset) commanded the light force designated V.A.L.F. in the official account of the engagement of March 27-29, 1941. Top, shells falling near the 'Orion' (flagship); centre, two 15-inch shells from the 'Vittorio Veneto' burst just beyond the cruiser 'Gloucester'; in the background, against the smoke-screen laid by the Italians, are the 'Perth' and 'Ajax.' Lowest photograph, a British destroyer picks up Italian survivors. Badges of three of the cruisers are shown in page 1454. *Photos, "News Chronicle"*



BRITISH WARSHIPS WHICH FOUGHT AT MATAPAN

H.M.S. 'Gloucester' (Captain A. H. Rowley) was flagship of Vice-Admiral H. D. Pridham-Wippell when his light forces intercepted the Italians on March 28, 1941. She made contact with the enemy at about 8 a.m. and turned away, decoying the Italians towards the main British forces. Later she came under the fire of the Italian battleship 'Vittorio Veneto.' Towards dusk another hot engagement took place. From the aircraft carrier 'Formidable' (commanded by Capt. A. Bissett) three formation attacks by aircraft were carried out against the 'Vittorio Veneto,' scoring direct hits which slowed down the enemy's speed to about 15 knots.

H.M.S. 'Gloucester,' typical of the Southampton class, displaces 9,400 tons and has a speed of nearly 33 knots. (A) twelve 6-inch guns; (B) multiple pom-poms; (C) eight 4-inch high-angle guns; (D) eight 21-inch torpedo tubes. Three aircraft are carried, in hangars (F). (E) is the catapult, and (G) are cranes. The ship is navigated from the superstructure (H), on top of which is a revolving tower (J), from which the 6-inch guns are directed. Motor-boats (K) are carried amidships.

Part of the deck and superstructure of H.M.S. 'Formidable' is shown. She displaces about 23,000 tons and the speed is about 30 knots. (L) is the lift for aircraft; 'planes on the flight-deck are Albacore torpedo-bombers. Navigating is carried out at (M); inside (N) are the chart room and meteorological office. The bridge (O) can be slung out over the flight deck. The main armament consists of about sixteen 4.5-inch A.A. guns in pairs (P), controlled from fire-directing tower (Q). In addition there are multiple pom-poms (R). (S) is a wireless aerial mast, lowered.

Drawn by Haworth

helped in the action and tried to cut off the Italian retreat.

The British ships rescued nearly a thousand Italians from the water, but between 300 and 400 more had to be left as German dive-bombers attacked the ships engaged on the work of mercy. Admiral Cunningham then wirelessed Italy giving the position of the men in the water and suggesting that a hospital ship should be sent; the answering signal from the Italian Commander-in-Chief thanked him and stated that the hospital ship "Gradista" was already on her way. About 3,000 Italians are estimated to have lost their lives in this action, which was a triumphant vindication of the Admiralty's policy of giving the most careful training in night fighting between the two wars and was contrived without the slightest damage to or a single casualty in the British ships. Two of our 'planes were missing from the torpedo and reconnaissance flights; one Italian and two German 'planes were shot down.



COMMANDED ITALIAN FLEET
Admiral Riccardi took the place of Cavagnari when the latter was dismissed in December 1940, and became Chief of Staff and Under-Secretary in the Italian Naval Ministry. He flew his flag in the 'Vittorio Veneto.'
Photo, Associated Press

Throughout March extravagant claims of naval successes had been put out by the Italians, in line with similar claims by Germany. After Matapan, as might be expected, the Italian claims continued. The first was that they had sunk two destroyers, badly damaged a battleship and sunk a big tanker, the last-named a curious ship to be included in a fleet fighting a high speed naval action. The final claim was that two cruisers and two smaller warships had been sunk; two battleships, one aircraft carrier and seven cruisers seriously damaged or torpedoed. The prize went to the Italian "Lord Haw-Haw," who said, in his English broadcast on Matapan: "One heavy British cruiser was sunk by a *broadcast* from an Italian battleship—I beg your pardon, the cruiser was sunk by a broadside." The Italian official account of the Matapan action stated that the object of the expedition was to attack British communications with Greece and Egypt.

Diary of the War

JANUARY and FEBRUARY, 1941

January 1, 1941. R.A.F. sink 10,000-ton vessel during raid on Tripoli harbour. Heavy night attack on Bremen. Flushing, Ostend and Brest also raided. German bombs fall in Eire.

January 2. Heavy R.A.F. attack on Bardia, Libya. Hitler sends air squadrons to Italy. Greeks cross River Bence (Albania) and advance three miles. Violent night raid on Cardiff. Bremen heavily attacked again.

January 3. Australian forces penetrate Bardia defences. Nazi bombs on Dublin. Bristol heavily raided. Third successive attack on Bremen. Announced that submarine "Thunderbolt" had sunk an Italian submarine.

January 4. Bitter fighting in Albania around Klisura and Tepelini. Prolonged night raids on West of England towns.

January 5. Bardia surrenders; 30,000 prisoners taken. Night raid on London.

January 8. British forces concentrating around Tobruk. R.A.F. attack Wilhelmshaven, Emden and Borkum. H.M. submarine "Regulus" considered lost.

January 9. Night bombers attack Gelsenkirchen, Düsseldorf and Channel Ports. Heavy raids on Messina, Naples and Palermo. Enemy night raids on London, Liverpool and elsewhere.

January 10. Engagement in Sicilian Channel between British warships escorting convoy to Greece and Axis aircraft. Destroyer "Gallant," aircraft carrier "Illustrious" and cruiser "Southampton" damaged; last-named becomes a total loss. Greeks take Klisura. Heavy night raid on Portsmouth, causing 28 fires.

January 11. Severe night raid on London; street subway wrecked. R.A.F. bomb shipbuilding yards at Wilhelmshaven and Turin arsenal.

January 12. Night raids on oil targets in Germany, Belgium and Italy.

January 13. Considerable Greek advance in Klisura-Tepelini sector. Gen. Soddu, Italian Commander in Albania, dismissed. Heavy night attack on Plymouth. We raid Lorient submarine base.

January 15. Sir Gerald Campbell appointed H.M. Minister in Washington. R.A.F. raids on Wilhelmshaven, Emden, Rotterdam, Flushing. All Abyssinia now reported in revolt. Men's hostel demolished during raid on London.

January 16. Prolonged night raid on Bristol. Ten enemy aircraft destroyed over Malta. Our bombers again raid Wilhelmshaven.

January 17. Enemy raids centre on Swansea. Two Italian troopships reported sunk in Adriatic.

January 19. Kassala, Sudan, again in British occupation. At least 17 Axis aircraft destroyed over Malta.

January 20. Hitler and Mussolini meet in Germany. Tobruk heavily raided.

January 21. Imperial troops penetrate Tobruk defences on broad front to depth of five miles. East of Kassala British pursue Italians 30 miles inside Eritrea. Day raids on eastern England.

January 22. Tobruk captured by Australians; 25,000 prisoners taken. Sicilian aerodromes heavily bombed by R.A.F. Loss of destroyer "Hyperion" announced. R.A.F. bomb Ruhr targets.

January 24. Antonescu quells Iron Guard revolt in Bucharest. Lord Halifax, new ambassador to U.S.A., is personally welcomed by President Roosevelt in Chesapeake Bay. Night attack on Lorient. Haile Selassie in Khartoum.

January 25. Large part of Abyssinia now in the hands of Patriot forces U-boat base at Lorient bombed.

January 27. Reported dismissal of Graziani. R.A.F. bomb Hanover.

January 28. Announced that a Free French force from Chad had advanced 400 miles and raided Murzuk, S.W. Libya. Loss of submarine "Triton" made known. Heavy R.A.F. raids on Naples and Sicilian aerodromes.

January 29. Night raid on London. Death of General Metaxas. Korizis appointed his successor.

January 30. Derna captured by Imperial forces. German fighters make concentrated attack on Dover balloon barrage.

January 31. Three London hospitals hit in daylight raid. R.A.F. make heavy night attack on docks at Tripoli.

February 1. Agordat, Eritrea, captured, and enemy pursued towards Keren. In Albania, Italians retreating towards Valona. British advance west of Derna.

February 2. In Abyssinia enemy in full retreat on Metemma-Gondar road. British naval aircraft attack power plant in Sardinia. Large formations of R.A.F. fighters and bombers carry out daylight offensive sweeps over Straits of Dover and enemy-occupied territory.

February 3. British capture Cyrene, Libya, and Barentu, Eritrea.

February 4. Night raids on Düsseldorf, Brest, Bordeaux, Vannes and Channel ports.

February 5. H.M. trawler "Lady Philomena" shoots down dive bomber attacking convoy off S.E. coast.

February 6. Benghazi surrenders. Mr. John G. Winant appointed U.S. ambassador to Britain. Channel invasion ports bombed.

February 7. Free French force from Chad captures Italian air base at Kufra, S. Libya. R.A.F. bomb Channel ports.

February 9. Royal Navy bombards Genoa. British units occupy El Agheila, Libya. Pétain appoints Darlan Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister.

February 10. General Wilson appointed C.-in-C. and Governor of Cyrenaica. Six-hour night raid on Hanover. British parachutists land in Calabria, S. Italy. British Government breaks off diplomatic relations with Rumania.

February 11. British warships bombard Ostend. King's African Rifles take Afmadu, It. Somaliland. Heavy R.A.F. raids on aerodromes in Sicily and Rhodes.

February 12. British occupy Elghena, Eritrea. Mussolini and Franco meet at Bordighera. Drifter "Eager" shoots down a Junkers bomber.

February 13. German surface raider sinks six ships in British convoy between Madeira and Azores. Night raid on London residential district, causing heavy casualties. Pétain confers with Franco at Montpellier.

February 14. Greeks open new offensive along 80-mile front. S. African troops occupy Kismayu, It. Somaliland. At night incendiaries fall over London, but fires are prevented.

February 15. Italian 11th Army routed in Moskopoli-Tepelini sector. R.A.F. make heavy attacks on Western Ruhr and Channel ports.

February 17. Turkey and Bulgaria issue joint statement reaffirming policy of non-aggression. Heavy night raid on London and on town in East Anglia.

February 18. U.S.A. creates defence zones in Pacific and Caribbean Sea, from which foreign ships and aircraft without permits will be excluded.

February 19. Heavy night attack on Swansea. London also raided. Our aircraft bomb Brest and Calais.

February 20. British troops now across River Juba, It. Somaliland. Another destructive night raid on Swansea; extensive damage to dwelling-houses. Mr. Eden in Cairo for consultations with military chiefs.

February 21. Third successive attack on Swansea. German troops massing on Rumanian-Bulgarian frontier. R.A.F. raid Wilhelmshaven, Western Ruhr, and aerodromes in France and Holland.

February 22. Jumbo, at mouth of River Juba, now in British hands. Renewal of Greek offensive, mainly in central sector.

February 23. Admiralty announces sinking of 7 supply ships by H.M. submarines in Mediterranean. Margherita and Jelib, It. Somaliland, captured. Heavy raid on a north-east town in England, causing considerable damage.

February 24. West African troops capture Brava, port in Eritrea. R.A.F. bomb docks at Brest.

February 25. Mogadishu, capital of It. Somaliland, captured. Moyale, frontier post in Abyssinia, again in British hands. Destroyer "Exmoor" sunk by E-boat while escorting convoy in North Sea.

February 26. Bardera, It. Somaliland, occupied. Heavy enemy night raids on South Wales. R.A.F. bomb Cologne. Seven dive-bombers destroyed over Malta.

February 27. British forces occupy Kelemit, Eritrea. Many enemy daylight attacks along East Coast, causing considerable damage and some casualties.

February 28. R.A.F. shoot down 27 Italian aircraft over Albania. Heavy bomber attacks on Wilhelmshaven, Emden, Lorient and Boulogne. Night raids on London.

Chapter 156

BALKAN STRATEGY DURING THE WINTER AND SPRING OF 1940-41

The first of three Chapters dealing with Axis campaigns in the Balkan Peninsula, this preliminary narrative explains the tortuous course of German diplomacy and depicts the political background against which, in April, Germany sprang her attack upon Yugoslavia and Greece

(The Italo-Greek Campaign is dealt with in Chapters 124, 129 & 152)

AXIS military planning and diplomatic manœuvre during the winter and spring of 1940–41 concentrated upon the subjugation of the Balkans. Already Hungary and Rumania had been brought within the Axis fold by their adherence to the Tripartite Pact, and their territories converted into lines of communication for the German armies destined to occupy Bulgaria and attack Yugoslavia and Greece. With the opening of the New Year plans were well advanced for the establishment of a German striking force in Bulgaria. Next on the list would be Yugoslavia, and then it would be Greece's turn. By these means Hitler calculated he would obtain the mastery of the Balkans, immobilize Turkey, and be ready to strike both at Britain in the Middle East and at Russia in the Caucasus.

The first step was to secure the entry into Rumania of German troops: they came via Hungary, by now the German bridgehead into the Balkans. A complete German grip on Rumania was established, especially after the arrival of von Killinger as the new German Minister at Bucharest. The Germans fomented Iron Guard revolts against the puppet Premier, General Antonescu, and then told him that unless he restored order and completely toed the line to German requirements he would be removed from office. The result was that Antonescu duly "restored order," and proclaimed his fervent loyalty to "the Great Fuehrer and the Great Duce." A necessary consequence was the rupture of relations with Rumania by the British Government on February 14, 1941.



PRO-AXIS MOVE THAT YUGOSLAV PEOPLE REPUDIATED

Here the Yugoslav Premier, Svetkovich, is seen with Hitler at Berchtesgaden (Feb. 14, 1941). On extreme left is the interpreter, Schmidt; behind Hitler and the Premier (almost hidden) is Cincar Markovich, Yugoslav Foreign Minister. The ubiquitous Ribbentrop, hand outstretched, stands at the right. This pourparler led to Yugoslavia signing the Tripartite Pact (March 25), but a popular rising negatived the betrayal.

Photo, Sport & General

The next German move was to weaken further the bonds uniting the Balkan Entente group (Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey) by engineering the Hungaro-Yugoslav Pact, which was signed at Budapest on December 12, 1940. Article 1 of the Pact spoke of "eternal friendship" and "perpetual peace." In the light of Hungary's role in the subsequent rape of Yugoslavia it is clear that the Hungarian signature was made with "tongue in cheek," except in the case of the Premier, Count Teleki. The Yugoslavs signed in the belief that the Pact would really contribute to the maintenance of peace. From the German point of view this move was just a stage in the isolation of Yugoslavia.

Hungaro-Yugoslav Pact

Meanwhile, in Bulgaria the King and his Ministers were pursuing a double-faced policy of public declarations of neutrality and secret connivance with Germany's plans against Yugoslavia and Greece. During December there were reports of a Soviet offer to Bulgaria of a Pact of Mutual Assistance, and there were public agitations in favour of neutrality, peace, and acceptance of Russia's offer. The Bulgarian Government made more declarations of neutrality, but arrested local Communists.

On January 1, 1941, M. Filoff (Bulgarian Premier) went to Vienna, and it turned out that Germany had complained that Bulgarian compliance with her demands was not sufficiently rapid. The Germans brought great pressure



BARDOSSY OF HUNGARY TOES THE NAZI LINE

Not many days after he succeeded Count Teleki, who killed himself rather than betray Hungary's best interests, Bardossy paid a ceremonial visit to Munich, and is here seen with the German guard of honour after laying a wreath at a war memorial.

Photo, Keystone

to bear, and by February it was evident that some kind of German occupation of the country was only a matter of time. Bulgarian statesmen were assured by Berlin that full compliance with Germany's wishes would result in Axis support for the realization of Bulgaria's revisionist aims. At the same time the Germans made a deal with the I.M.R.O. (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization), the Macedo-Bulgarian terrorist organization led by the assassin Mihailov. On February 4 there came the news that Germany had proposed that Bulgaria should adhere to the Tripartite Pact, and that a demand for the entry of German troops was about to follow.

Russia stated that if there were any German troops in Bulgaria they were there without her knowledge or consent. Turkey expressed her concern by stating in the newspapers that if Germans penetrated into the Turkish zone of interest the Government would take the necessary measures to meet the situation. But the fact that Russia did not take any positive action seems to have weakened the Turkish attitude. For it became clear as time went on that this attitude had been modified—at least to the extent that Turkey would allow her actions to be determined by the nature and extent of the German drive.

The Turks did, however, make an eleventh-hour attempt to restrain the Bulgarians from going too far on their pro-German course. This took the form of the Turco-Bulgarian Declaration of Non-Aggression, signed on February 17, which was to have no effect one way or the other on the development of the situation. On the same date Mr. Rendell, British Minister, called on M. Popoff and stated that the British Government would respect Bulgarian independence after the war provided Bulgaria did not assist the Axis during the war. But already (on February 15) Bulgarian mobilization had started, and preparations were in hand for facilitating the entry of the Germany army.

That army came to Bulgaria by the usual homoeopathic methods. At first the specialists and technical experts arrived; then came the bulk of the German forces. General von List set up his headquarters near Sofia. The Bulgarian army was massed mainly on the Bulgaro-Turkish frontier, while the I.M.R.O. bands took up their positions ready to cross the border into Yugoslav Macedonia. By March the German army was in control of Bulgaria. The mass of the peasant population viewed the situation with profound misgivings, but the ruling classes—i.e. the Palace, the politicians in power, the civil service, the army chiefs and, needless to say, the Macedonian terrorist leaders—enthusiastically welcomed the German troops and cooperated with them. Because of Bulgarian cooperation with Germany, Britain broke off diplomatic relations on March 5.

In the meantime Turkey had to be pacified. On March 4 Hitler sent a personal note to President Inönü, hoping to influence the Turks into accepting in advance any move which Germany might make in the Balkans. But Turkey refused to commit herself in this way. On the contrary, foreseeing dangers to Yugoslavia as well as Greece, the Turkish Press exhorted the Yugoslavs to resist Germany.

In Yugoslavia precautionary measures were taken. On March 5 the 1891–1919 classes were called to the colours, but the government made reassuring statements. The Deputy Premier denied "alarmist rumours," and in a broadcast speech from Leipzig the Minister for Commerce spoke of German-Yugoslav friendship. Yugoslavia had already been subjected to German pressure, and German penetration had gone a long way. By March 12 a million men had been

YUGOSLAV PREMIER SIGNS THE TRIPARTITE PACT

This photograph shows the scene in the Belvedere Palace at Vienna when Cincar Markovich (seated, left), Svetkovich (centre) and Ribbentrop signed the Tripartite Pact (March 25, 1941). Yugoslavia, of course, was admitted only as a satellite. Two days later a spontaneous revolution of the Yugoslav people turned out Regent and Government.

Photo, Keystone





NEW YUGOSLAV PREMIER

On March 27, 1941, in the early morning, a swift uprising turned out Svetkovich and his Government and called the young King Peter to rule in place of the Regent. General Simovich (above) became Prime Minister in the new Government.

Photo, G.P.U.

called to the colours. It became known on the 15th that the Belgrade government had rejected a German proposal that Yugoslavia should come into the New Order, and that Yugoslavia had offered instead a Pact of Non-Aggression, which had been rejected by the Germans.

Bardossy, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, went to Munich to see Ribbentrop, and arrangements were made for Hungary's cooperation in a possible German attack on Yugoslavia. After Bardossy's return Count Teleki, the Premier, resigned and later killed himself.

Matters were fast approaching a crisis. Hitler wanted Yugoslavia for three main purposes: (1) the transit of German troops to Greece, when the time should come for aid to be given to the Italians in the Greco-Italian war; (2) the use of Yugoslav foodstuffs for the German army; and (3) a "friendly" Yugoslavia on his flank when the time should come to launch his attack on Russia. He proposed to accomplish these aims by diplomatic means, but if these should fail he would employ force. In either case he intended to partition Yugoslavia between Germany and Italy and the Axis satellites. Preparations for this dismemberment were already in hand when Yugoslavia was being urged to join the Tripartite Pact.

On March 21 the Yugoslav Cabinet issued a statement that neutrality might have to be modified owing to the military situation and the country's geographical position, and that therefore Yugoslavia might have to adhere to something like the Tripartite Pact, if not to the Pact itself. There were protests to Prince Paul by the Orthodox Church and by the organization of reserve officers. The government let it be known that they were aiming at a compromise agreement with Germany.

By March 23 the text of the German offer became known. Germany insisted that Yugoslavia should adhere to the actual Tripartite Pact, and was not willing to make any modifications other than attaching two annexes to the



REGENT CHATS WITH HITLER

Prince Paul of Yugoslavia, chief of the three Regents for the young King Peter, faced a difficult task when war approached the Balkans. He was displaced by the revolution of March 27, and King Peter took over the direction of affairs.

Photo, Associated Press

Pact to meet Yugoslav susceptibilities on the question of giving passage to German troops. At the same time it became known that there were secret clauses in virtue of which Yugoslavia would be called upon (1) to allow the passage of German war material and medical supplies in sealed trains and (2) to suppress anti-Axis activities within her territories. In return for this Germany would support Yugoslav aspirations in the Aegean and the Adriatic.

It afterwards leaked out that Prince Paul had paid a secret visit to Hitler, in the course of which the Fuehrer had outlined these proposals. Their publication let loose a veritable storm. Four Serbian Ministers resigned from the Cabinet, and there were demonstrations against the government and the Axis. But the die was cast, and on March 25 Svetkovich and Markovich departed for Vienna to sign the Pact. It must be put to Svetkovich's credit that before leaving he had submitted to the Prince Regent a memorandum in which he advised against capitulation and urged that if Yugoslavia were to resist Germany she would at least preserve her honour. But Prince Paul was insistent. He had previously been an Anglophil, and his decision to give way to the Axis was the outcome of a combination of weakness and obstinacy. He had convinced himself, months before, that the Allies would not be able to come to the help of Yugoslavia in time, and he was obsessed by the idea that the only way to keep his country from disruption was to save it from war.

At Vienna Ribbentrop handed Svetkovich two documents, attached to the Pact, which were designed to give a false coating of sugar to the bitter pill. One of these annexes stated that "Germany reaffirms its determination to respect at all times the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia"; the other stated that "during the war Germany would not make any



BRITISH MINISTER TO BELGRADE

Mr. Ronald Campbell left Belgrade when the German invasion of Yugoslavia began on April 6, 1941. His party motored to the Adriatic coast, where he was to have been taken aboard the British submarine, 'Regent' but the latter did not arrive until after the party had fallen into the hands of the Italians. After five weeks' detention he and his colleagues left for England, via Lisbon, and reached London on June 19.

Photo, Associated Press

demands to Yugoslavia to allow passage of or transit of German troops." But everybody knew that the sealed trains—to contain "war material and medical supplies"—would also accommodate German soldiers.

When Bulgarians heard of Germany's terms to Yugoslavia, especially in regard to the offer of an outlet on the Aegean, they were furious and declared that they had been "double-crossed." But the Germans reassured them about support for Bulgarian claims. Accordingly, Bulgarian troops were prepared for taking action and moved towards the Yugoslav frontier. Britain broke off diplomatic relations.

The Yugoslav Ministers returned to Belgrade, but, fearing an outburst of popular indignation, alighted at a suburban station, where they were received by Prince Paul. The expected outburst became in fact a spontaneous uprising of the people. General Simovich, supported by army and air force officers, brought off a *coup d'état;* he deposed the Prince Regent and dissolved the Government, proclaiming Prince Peter as King. Svetkovich and Markovich were arrested and Prince Paul was sent out of the country.





WHEN THE YUGOSLAV NATION SAVED ITS SOUL

Students in Belgrade demonstrating in favour of the new Government after the coup d'état of March 27, 1941, which turned out the pro-Axis party. Top, King Peter being sworn in by the Patriarch Gavrilo, in the presence of the new Ministers (General Simovich in doorway).

Photos, Keystone

The new government were careful not to provoke the Axis, but they realized that Germany would not passively accept this sudden reversal of policy, and so they set to work to put the country in a state of defence. But Germany allowed them no time: she struck suddenly, without declaration of war, on April 6. The story of the war in Yugoslavia and the subsequent German drive to Greece is told in Chapters 157 and 158, but it is apposite to mention here the following events.

When General Simovich formed his government the Croat Ministers, who previously had favoured compliance with Germany's demands, pledged their complete support of the policy of resistance. The Croatian quisling Pavelich and his following in the terrorist "Ustacha," who crept in behind the Axis armies and set up an "independent" Croatia, did not represent the mass of the Croatian people. They were a handful of Fifth Columnists in the pay of Mussolini and Hitler. In the same way Mihailov, of the I.M.R.O., entered in the wake of the Bulgarian army and became the "uncrowned king" of Macedonia.

This was the situation when Yugoslavia, alone and unprepared, stood up to face the combined onslaught of Germany, Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria. Diplomatically isolated, militarily surrounded, internally disrupted, she had not a chance. But she took the risk for the sake of national honour. In the event, she was to suffer physical annihilation. But, as Mr. Winston Churchill said at the time in memorable words, "Yugoslavia had found her soul."

Chapter 157

SWIFT GERMAN CONQUEST OF YUGOSLAVIA, APRIL 6-17, 1941

Belgrade Bombed to Destruction—Yugoslavia's Tiny Army—Four Main Enemy Thrusts—Evacuation of Skoplje—Fall of Nish—Loss of Northern Provinces—Croatia Declares Her Independence—Enemy Forces the Monastir Gap—British and Germans in Contact—Hungary Invades Yugoslavia—Belgrade Captured: Yugoslav Government Goes to Sarajevo—Italians Reach Cetinje—Yugoslavia Capitulates, on April 18, 1941

HITLER'S bombers opened the war against Yugoslavia. At dawn on April 6 strong formations, escorted by hordes of fighters, appeared over Belgrade, the Yugoslav capital. The Yugoslav Government had declared the city an open town so as to spare it the horrors of bombardment, but the plea was pushed contemptuously aside. Belgrade, said Berlin radio, in an attempt at justification, had not only a "fortress" but numerous aerodromes, barracks, and other military objectives which could not be spared. So for hours the Stukas dropped their loads of destruction and death. "Belgrade, the capital of our country," said the Yugoslav Government in a message addressed to "all civilized people," "which in good time was proclaimed an open and undefended city, was bombed by German aircraft without a declaration of war.

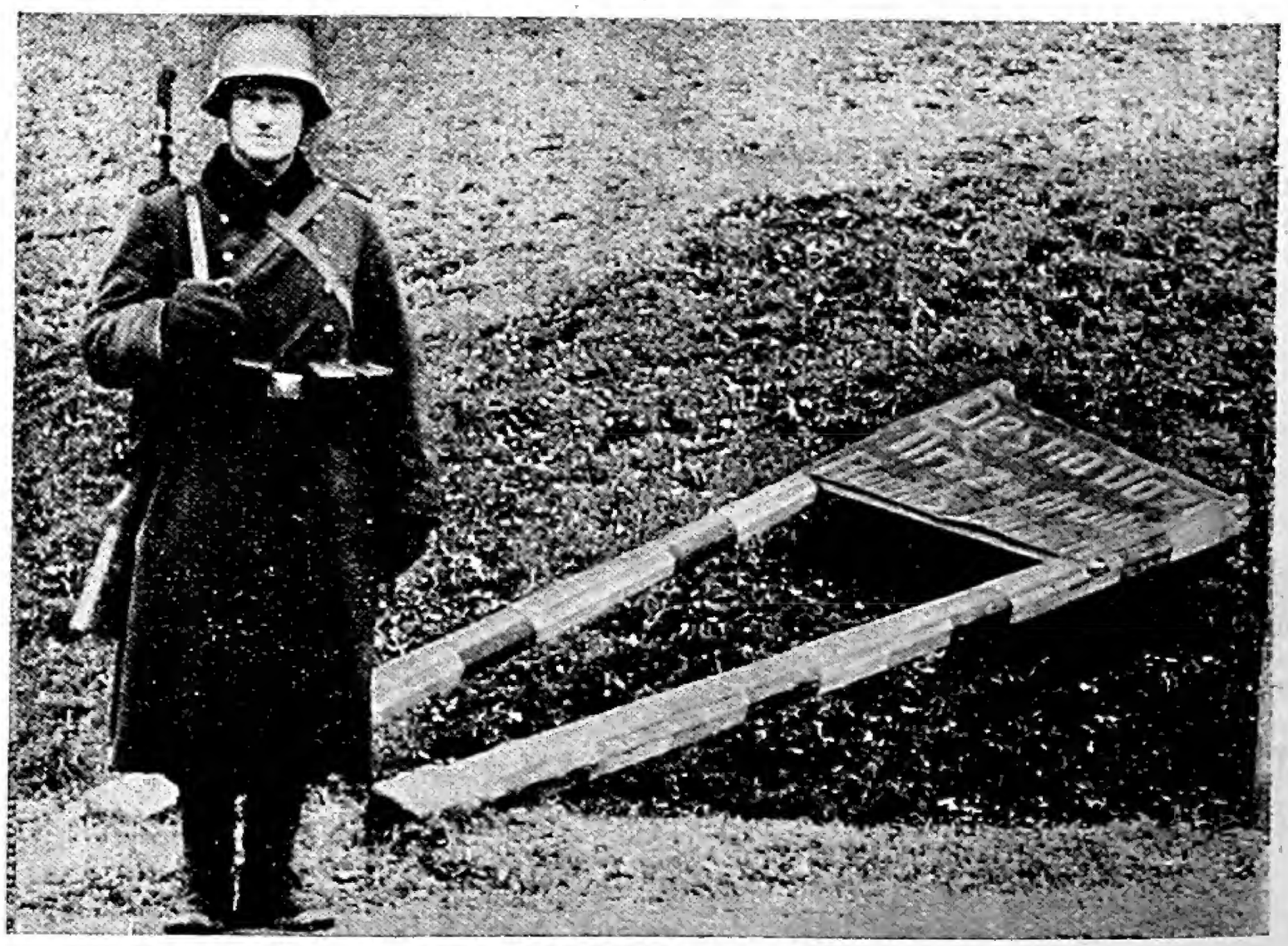
"On Sunday morning, while the sound of church bells was calling the faithful to church for Divine Service, a bombardment, eclipsing in horror all imagination, was launched by German aeroplanes. A veritable deluge of incendiary and explosive bombs turned the city into a mass of ruins and gutted homes, while all the streets of Belgrade were covered with the bodies of children, women and old men. Never, during the long history of this martyr city, were such cruelties committed, even by the most primitive invaders. Hospitals, churches, schools and cultural institutions were destroyed in broad daylight . . . Horrible scenes occurred during the bombardment when German aeroplanes machine-gunned women and children fleeing from their burning homes. Flying low, the German bombers turned houses into hecatombs."

Bombing of Belgrade

While the bombs were falling on the capital, the Yugoslav authorities were striving desperately to mobilize their troops. Through the perverse politics of their predecessors in office the country was very largely unprepared for war, and of the 28 infantry divisions and three cavalry divisions only five infantry divisions and one-and-a-half cavalry divisions were actually engaged in the decisive fighting against the German invader. But in any case the contestants were hardly matched. In peacetime the strength of the Yugoslav Army was about 130,000 men, though just before the war started it was stated that a million Yugoslavs were under arms. Against that Field-Marshal List brought a host (so the Yugoslav Prime Minister has stated) of 33 divisions, including six armoured and four mechanized divisions. On paper the invader had perhaps no numerical superiority, but in fact he revealed an immense superiority at the most vital points; besides, the Germans had hundreds of tanks, while the Yugoslavs had practically none, and they had over 2,000 'planes, as compared with the Yugoslav 300 first-line aircraft.

Poorly equipped and indifferently led, the Yugoslav Army was hopelessly out-generalled. The war was not altogether unexpected, but the military authorities had anticipated that the main blow would be delivered from the north, from across the German and Hungarian frontiers. In the northern provinces, then, the main body of the Yugoslav forces (the Fourth and First Armies) had been assembled, and elaborate defences and tank traps had been prepared; the rest of the very long front, amounting to some 1,500 miles, was held much more loosely. In the event the main attack did not come from the anticipated quarter, but from Bulgaria in the east, against the Yugoslav Fifth Army at Nish and the Third at Skoplje (Uskub), across country which had been considered almost too difficult for infantry, let alone tanks.

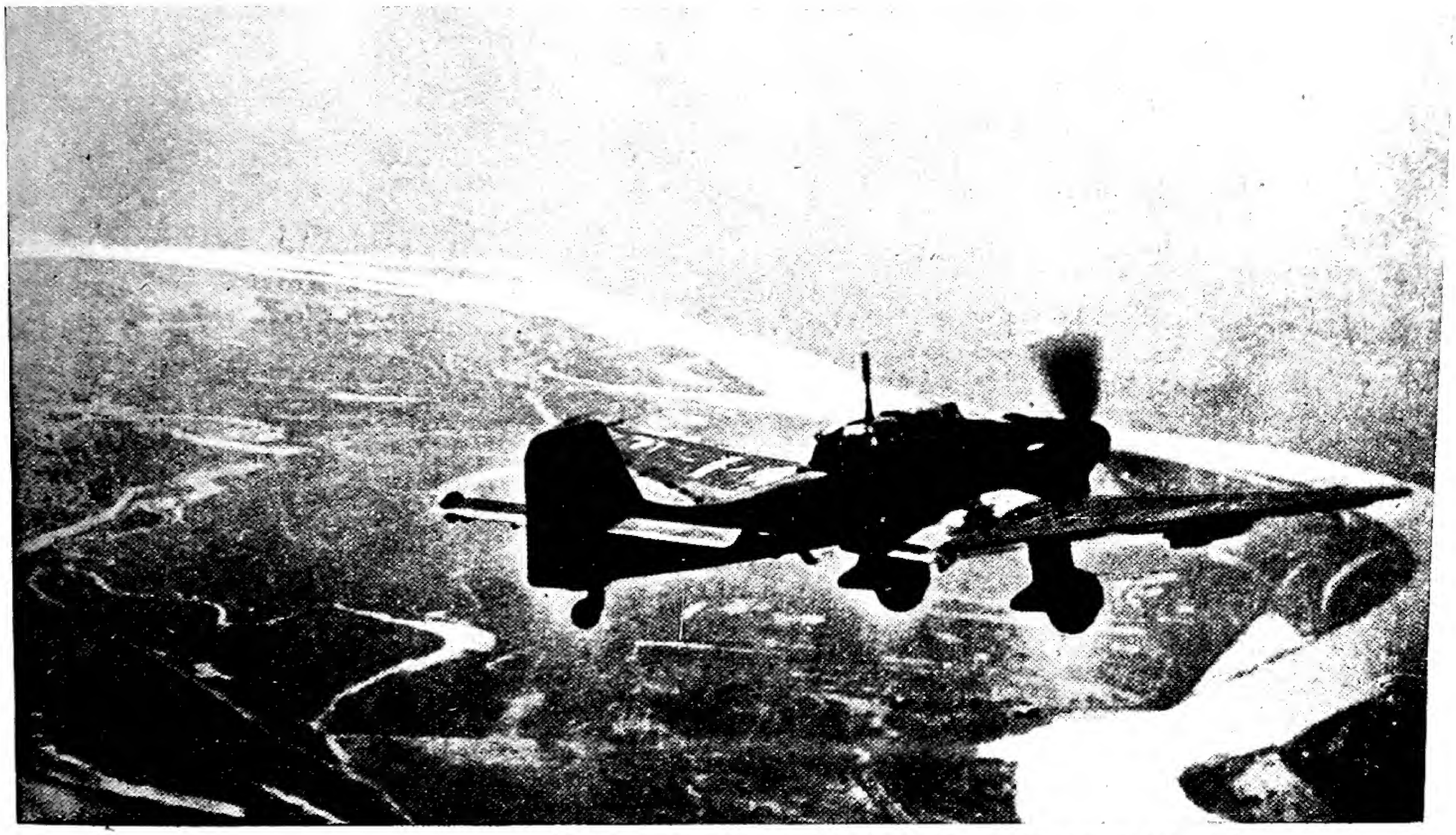
The first Yugoslav communiqué, issued over Belgrade radio (after a two-day silence) on April 8, declared that on all fronts the situation was favourable. Enemy attacks had been repulsed



AFTER GERMAN HORDE HAD DRIVEN THROUGH

A German sentinel at the Reich frontier with Yugoslavia near Klagenfurt, shortly after the invasion of April 6, 1941. The boundary posts have been pulled up; they carried the direction "Keep to the Right" in three languages.

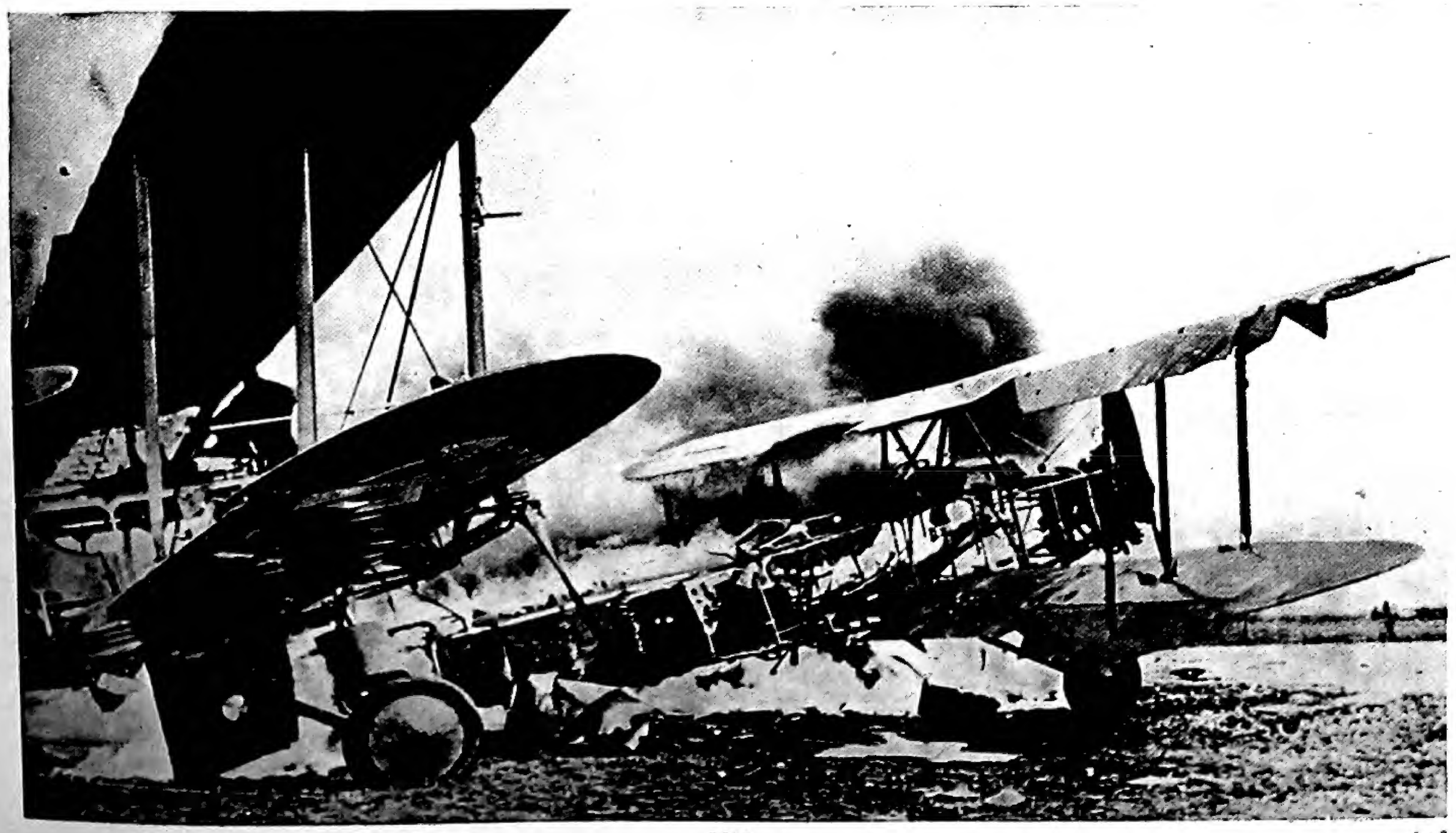
Photo, Keystone

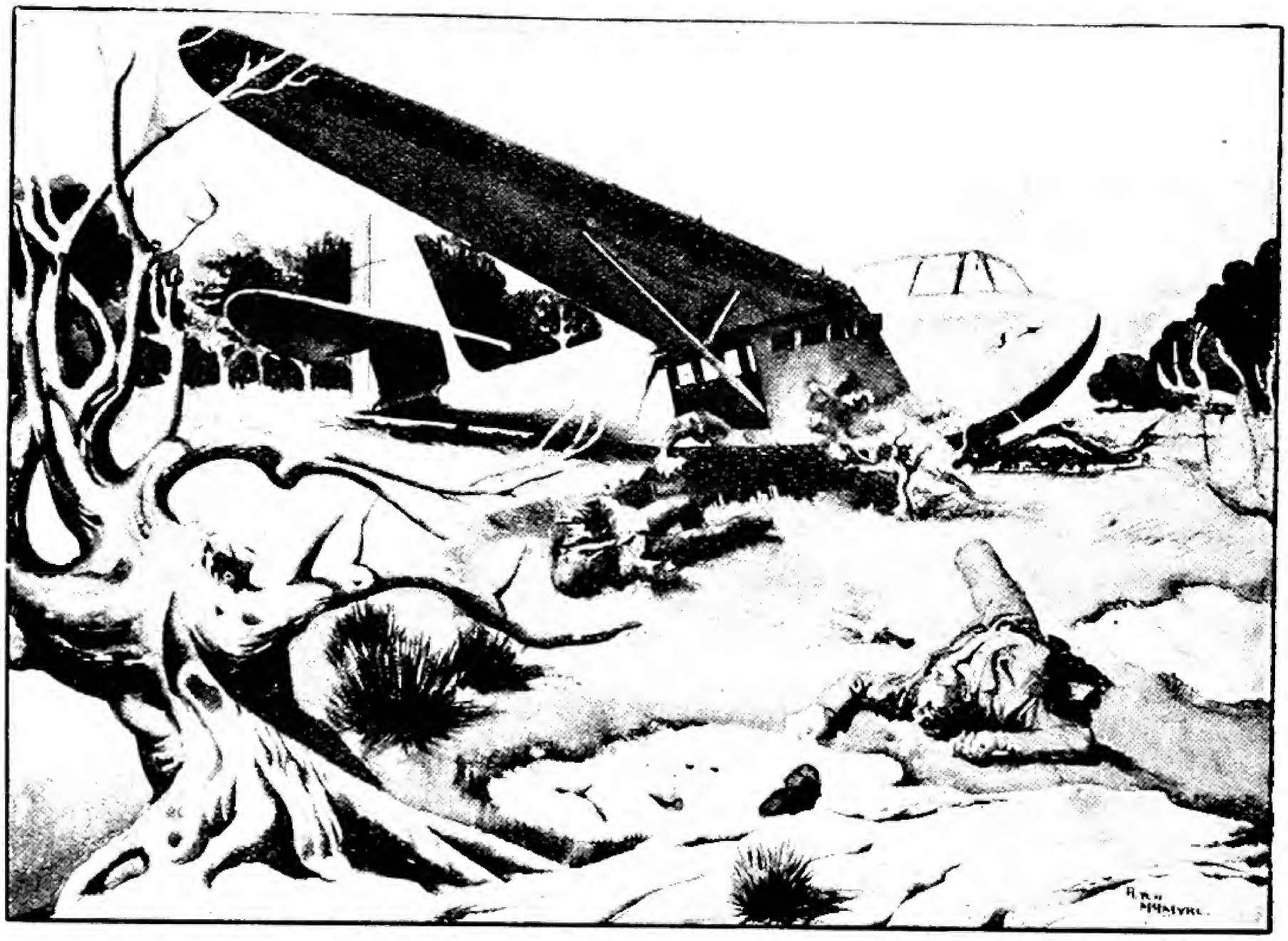


ON BRAVE YUGOSLAVIA FELL HITLER'S FURY

Top, what the German caption describes as a Stuka attack on the ' fortress ' of Belgrade. Below, Yugoslav aircraft at an airport near the capital : they were set on fire by the Nazi bombardment of April 6, 1941, and, in the words of General Simovich, ' the comparatively small Air Force was wiped out in two days of cruel battle.'

Photos, Keystone ; Associated Press









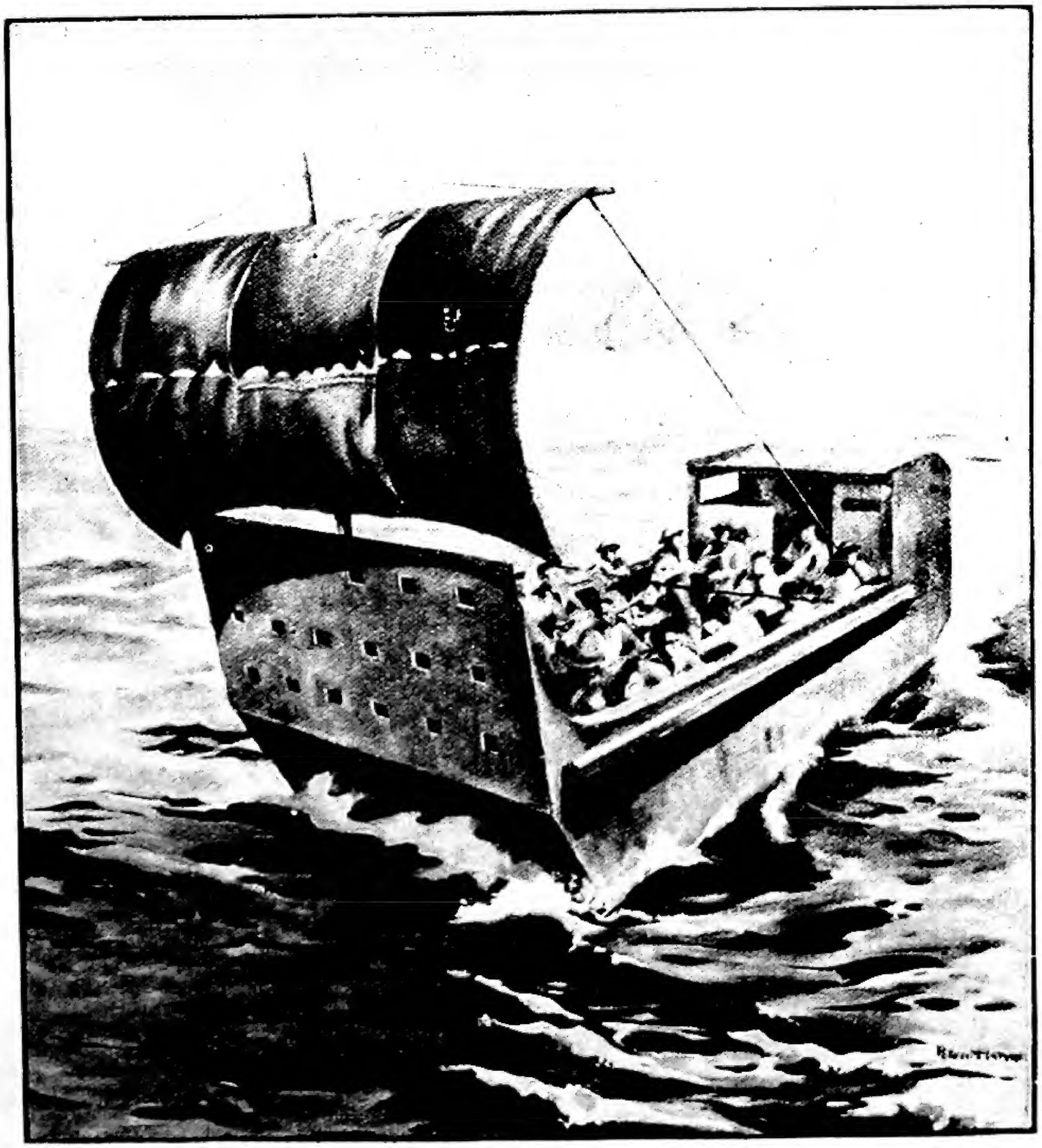
WAR ARTIST'S VIVID IMPRE

Captain Peter McIntyre, to whose brush we
artist with the New Zealand Expeditionary F
ence in the ranks, he painted what he witness
are those of enemy soldiers shot on landing.
Maleme, Germans (on right) and New Zealan
attack on 7th General Hospital on May 20 (
were driven out of the hospital but forced t
Galatos, where our troops came to the rescue
May 20, 1941. Lower right, 'invasion' l
to Egypt from Crete ; after fuel for the mo
made of blankets and

By courtesy of the







IONS OF BATTLE FOR CRETE

ve these remarkable paintings, was the official
e. A soldier himself, with over a year's experi-
Top, left, a crashed German glider; the bodies
ntre, at a British forward dressing station, near
rs (on left) are being tended. Top, right, German
latos seen in right background). The Germans
patients to go before them as a screen up to
Lower, left, parachutists descending on Galatos,
te in which a party of British soldiers sailed
gave out a New Zealand private rigged a sail
igated the craft to safety.

Zealand Government



CORINTH CANAL AND ISTHMUS IN GERMAN HANDS

Between April 23 and 25, 1941, the Imperial forces holding the Thermopylae line were withdrawn across the Isthmus of Corinth into Peloponnesus to be embarked for Crete. The enemy attempted unsuccessfully to take them in the rear, and troops of an S.S. division entered Corinth on the 26th (top), after its capture by enemy parachute units. Below, other S.S. troops cross the Gulf of Corinth. By May 2 some 43,000 Imperial troops had been safely evacuated—out of a total of about 60,000.

Photos, Associated Press





IN SARAJEVO OF UNHAPPY MEMORIES

German soldiers sight-seeing in Sarajevo after the Nazi invasion of Yugoslavia. It was here that the Archduke Francis Ferdinand was assassinated on June 28, 1914—an event that led up to the outbreak of the First Great War.

Photo, Keystone

with great vigour and the infliction of heavy losses, and the Yugoslav Air Force had achieved special distinction in its encounters with the enemy. But a distinctly different impression was given by the communiqué issued from the Greek G.H.Q. on the same day. "The Yugoslav Army fighting in South Yugoslavia," it read, "has been obliged under pressure to withdraw to consolidate its positions, leaving the Greek flank uncovered."

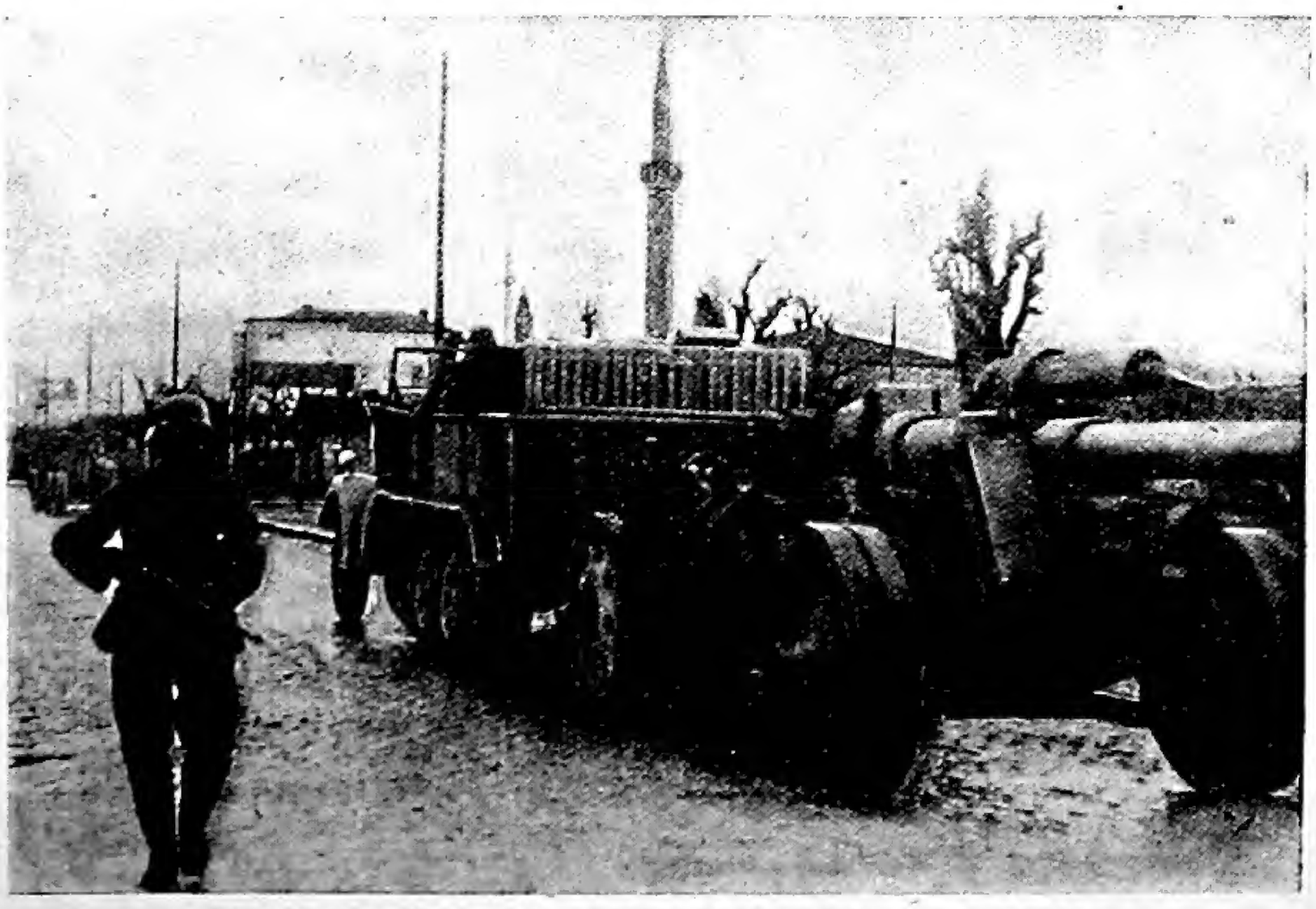
The "pressure" referred to was one of four principal thrusts which the Germans were delivering from Bulgaria. The most northern was from Sofia, the Bulgarian capital, by way of Pirot and down the Nishava valley to Nish, thus cutting the main N.–S. railway. A second thrust was directed, again from Sofia, through Kyustendil, against Skoplje. The third thrust also had Skoplje for its objective, but it came by way of the Bregalnitza valley. Then the fourth thrust (the most dangerous in the event) was up the Strumitza valley; it had the effect, as we have already noted, of turning the flank of the Greek positions at the head of the Rupel pass. Once through the Strumitza valley—and the passage took them only a few hours—some of the invaders swept to the left, charging down the road to Doiran and alongside the Vardar, their objective the great Greek port of Salonika, which fell on April 9;

Four German Thrusts

others went *up* the Vardar valley and made straight for Skoplje. At Veles, where the Yugoslav resistance was crushed by a charge of German tanks, the invaders made contact with their comrades making the third thrust—the one which was being developed through the Bregalnitza. Thus assailed, the Serbs in Skoplje were overwhelmed, despite a desperate resistance. Then one German column carried on westwards so as to link up with the Italians in Albania, who were now being attacked by units of the Serbian Third Army, as well as by the Greeks operating from the south. In this way a wedge was driven between the Yugoslav armies north of Skoplje and their allies, the Greeks and British "Forces of the Empire," who were heavily engaged to the south.

The evacuation of Skoplje was admitted by the Yugoslav G.H.Q. on April 9, but it was claimed that the enemy armoured units had suffered enormous losses from the Yugoslav bombing 'planes in their passage through the Katchanik pass; also that the Yugoslav offensive in Albania was continuing energetically, and that the interior of the country had been reached.

There was little justification for this optimism, alas. That same day the Germans issued communiqué after communiqué. The first contained the news of the fall of Salonika and the capitulation of the Greek Army east of the Vardar. Then followed the tidings that the mechanized troops and tanks of Gen. von Kleist's army had captured Nish at 11 a.m., and that the German troops who, after capturing Skoplje and Veles, had continued their advance towards the Albanian frontier, had occupied Tetovo. In Southern Serbia, it was claimed, 20,000 prisoners, including six generals, had been taken,



GERMAN HEAVY ARTILLERY ENTERS SKOPLJE

This photo shows the arrival in Skoplje (Uskub), on the river Vardar, of the first Nazi troops early in April, 1941. Along a road guarded by troops with rifles at the "ready," the heavy guns go forward to crush Yugoslav resistance and aid the Italians on the Greek front.

Photo, Keystone

together with large quantities of guns and other war material.

The next day, April 10, brought news of fresh disasters. The last units of the Yugoslav Third Army left in a fighting condition in South Serbia had been destroyed or captured by a German division near Krivolak. In Central Serbia the Yugoslavs, retreating from Nish towards the north-west, had been severely mauled, with the loss of over 10,000 prisoners and 70 guns. Then, in the north, General von Weichs had forced the passage of the River Drava and made a highly successful drive to the south, while in the north-west the Croat capital, Zagreb, had been invaded by German tanks. Shortly afterwards these enemy successes were admitted by the Yugoslav High Command. All the northern provinces of the country had in fact been lost, not, it transpired, through hard fighting but because of the apathy (if not worse) of the Croat population. On April 11 Gen. Sladko Kvaternik, calling himself Chief of State, declared "Croatia free and independent," and two days later the notorious terrorist, Anton Pavelich, arrived to take over the conduct of affairs as an Axis quisling.

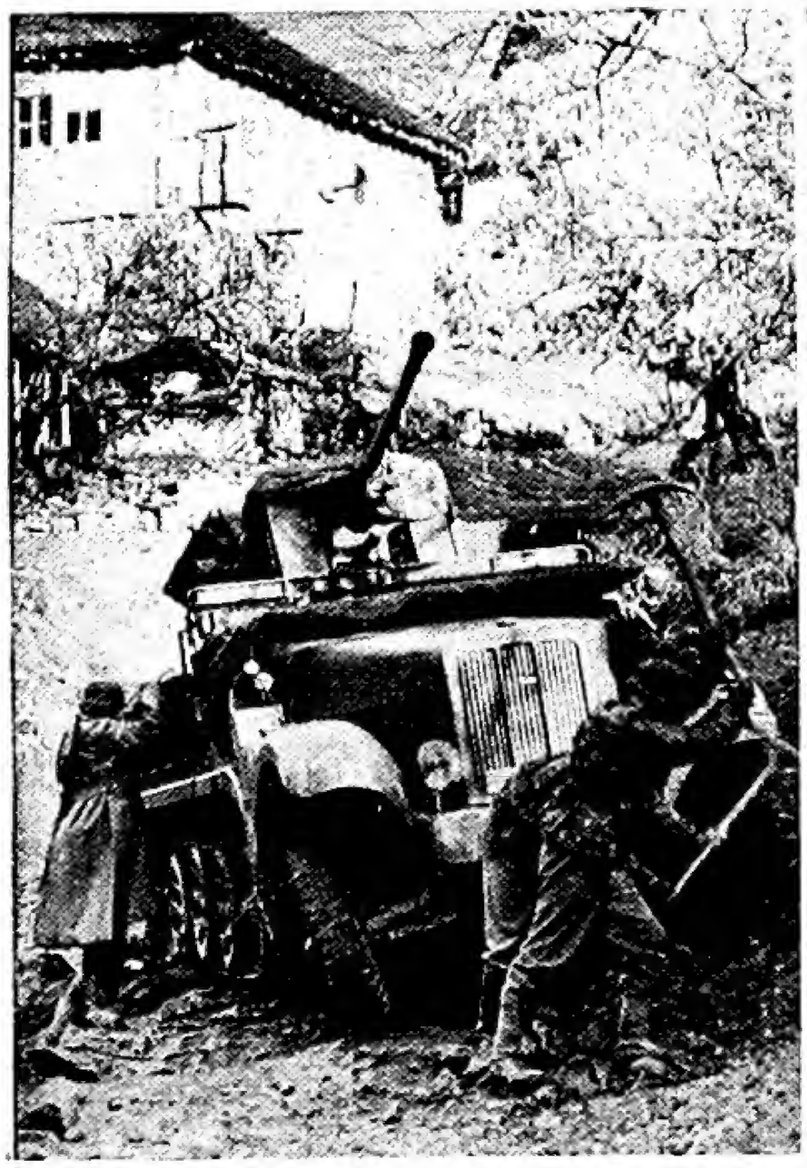
Disasters in Serbia

Monastir (Bitolj), too, was taken on April 10 by the Germans, who drove onwards through the vitally important Monastir gap to assail the Greek



WHERE GERMAN ARMIES INVADED YUGOSLAVIA

From Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary and the Reich the invaders swept into Yugoslavia, whose last-minute revolution against the pro-Axis Government of Prince Paul and Tsetkovich had halted the Nazi plans. The defenders' positions on the opening day (April 6) and April 11 are indicated. A map showing the simultaneous invasion of Greece is printed in page 1635.





CHECKED BY THE NARROW ROADS OF SERBIA

Left, Serbian roads were too narrow for many of the artillery tractors used by the Germans, and had to be widened en route. The poor surface and deep mud made matters difficult even for motor-cycle troops (right): a sharpshooter in trouble.

Photos, Associated Press

positions at Florina. This advance was referred to in the first communiqué issued, on April 11, from the headquarters in Greece of the Forces of the Empire, under Lt.-Gen. Sir Henry Maitland Wilson. "German troops advancing in the north-west contacted British and Imperial forces yesterday."

With Nish, Skoplje and Monastir, all three, in their hands, the Germans were in complete control of all the lines of communication in Southern Yugoslavia, and three of the Yugoslav armies, the Third, Fifth and Sixth, had been practically destroyed. Their fellows in the north and west had no better fortune. The First Army, which had been covering Belgrade, was outflanked by Nazi columns which had raced on to seize Kragujevac. The capital's fate was sealed when Admiral Horthy, declaring that the creation of an independent Croatia made plain that Yugoslavia had ceased to exist, ordered the Hungarian army to occupy the formerly Hungarian territory lying between the Hungarian frontier and the Danube, to "protect the Hungarian population living there." Parachutists led the advance, which indeed met with but slight resistance, and on April 12



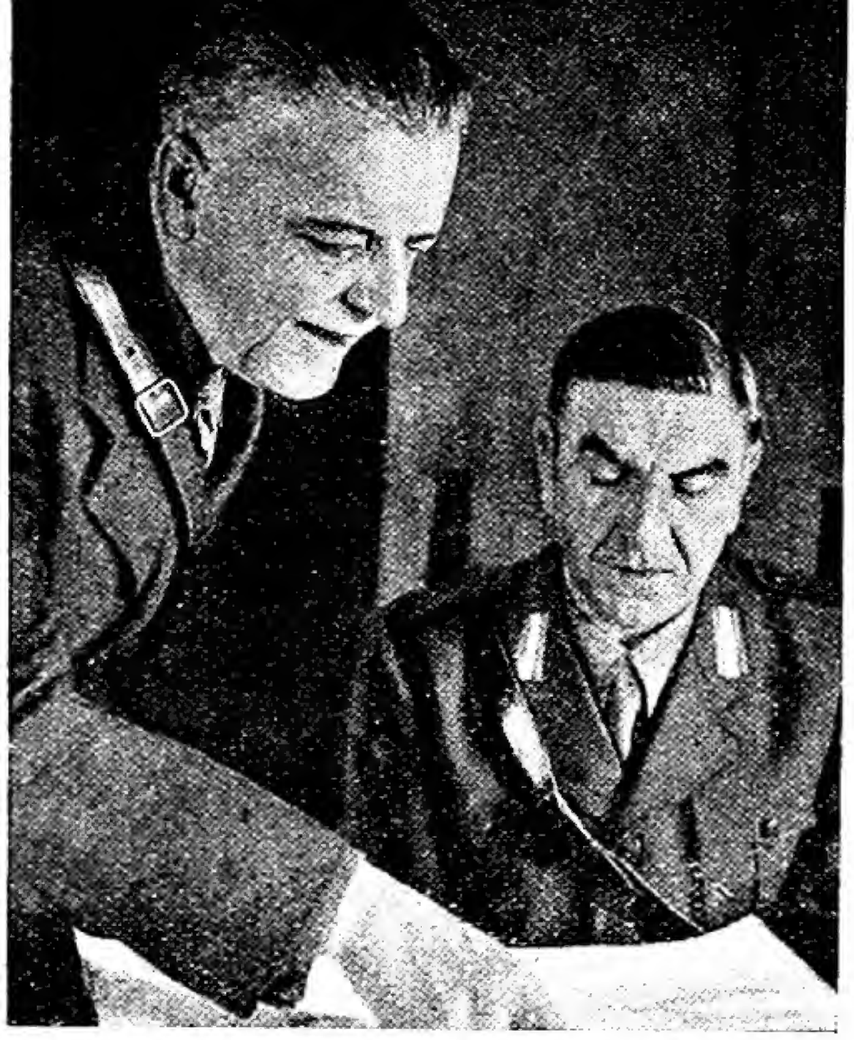


YUGOSLAVIA IN NAZI HANDS

Swiftly the Germans seized key-points in Yugoslavia and bore down the resistance of the defenders, though not without heavy losses. Top, left, a German ambulance train in Nish on its way to the Reich. Right, how the Nazis crossed the River Drava on pontoons. Below, left, an advance unit of motor-cycle sharpshooters entering Belgrade. Below, right, Serbian women return to their village, glancing askance at German tanks moving towards Greece.

Photos, Keystone; E.N.A.; Wide World





CROATIAN QUISLING

Under Nazi auspices General Kvaternik (left) declared Croatia an independent state on April 11, 1941. Soon after there arrived in the wake of the Nazi invaders Anton Pavelich (right), a terrorist of the Ustacha, to be the local quisling.

Photo, E.N.A.

occupied Novi Sad. The same afternoon a small detachment of the S.S. division under Capt. Klingenberger made a penetration of the northern suburbs from across the Danube, and units of a tank division reached the centre of the city from the west after nightfall. At dawn on Sunday, April 13, Gen. von Kleist's troops occupied the city from the south.

The Yugoslav Government retired to Sarajevo, capital of the province of Bosnia and headquarters of their Second Army. At once the place became the principal target of the Nazi bombers, and the Germans claimed that their airmen had secured direct hits on large military camps near the railway station, and that extensive damage had been caused in the town. On April 16 the Germans claimed the fall of the town and the capitulation of what was left of the Second Army. "The remnants of the Serbian Army are approaching disintegration," read the German communiqué of that day; "German mechanized troops have advanced to Sarajevo and have occupied it." Thousands of Serbians laid down their arms, and the prisoners and material captured increased in numbers hourly. Some 50,000 men and eight generals had been taken by one German division, boasted Berlin radio. "The roads present a picture of a complete military rout. They are strewn with abandoned and broken-down tanks, as well as rifles and machine-guns."

Government at Sarajevo

Meanwhile, the Italians attacking from the west had made steady progress, since resistance could be but slight. Ljubljana fell on April 13, when the advance down the Dalmatian coast had been in progress for some days. By April 16 they were at Split, and Dubrovnik and Cetinje fell two days later. Bulgaria broke off relations with Yugoslavia on April 15—in time to claim a share in the spoils.

Practically the whole of Yugoslavia was now in enemy hands; there could not be any further organized resistance. So shortly before midnight on the night of April 17 the German High Command was able to state that "all the Yugoslav armed forces which had not been disarmed before laid down their arms unconditionally at nine o'clock tonight. The capitulation comes into force at noon tomorrow." Young King Peter had already gone to Greece, and he was followed by General Simovich and members of his Cabinet.

So in twelve days of total war Yugoslavia was crushed. Broadcasting two months later, General Simovich gave as the principal reasons for the Yugoslav defeat the insufficiency of their preparations and the flank attack from Bulgaria by a superior air force and very powerful armoured formations. "Our troops resisted the enemy on all sides and fought heroically, generously shedding their blood. The soldiers of the Sumadija, Morava and Toplica divisions fought like lions in the battles round Strumica (N. of Doiran), Stracin and Pirot. With fixed bayonets and hand grenades they leapt on to the armoured cars of the enemy and destroyed them by throwing their grenades through the openings. But all the bravery of these heroes was utterly insufficient to overcome the terrible onslaught of an enemy superior both in number and technical equipment. . . . The struggle on all the fronts and along all the lines cost us enormous losses. Steel and technics were stronger than warriors and heroes. Our men died in an unequal struggle of men against guns and hand grenades, against tanks and aeroplanes. Our small air force was annihilated in cruel battle in the first two days of the war. The soldier was left without defence from the air just as he was without means of technical defence on land. He fought bare-breasted and with his muscles. He died for freedom and honour, and, although brief in time, our war with Germany was not fought in vain. "Still," the Prime Minister went on, "the struggle is not at an end, since the Yugoslav people prefer honest death to shameful slavery. The whole of Yugoslavia is occupied by Germans, Italians, Hungarians, and Bulgarians; it is planned in Berlin that Yugoslavia shall cease to exist. Yet all Yugoslavs are firmly convinced that at the victory of the Western Democracies their free and indivisible state will have a day of resurrection."



YUGOSLAVS CAPITULATE AFTER TWELVE BITTER DAYS

Many of the Yugoslav forces were captured when Sarajevo (temporary seat of Government) fell on April 16, 1941; Belgrade had been in German hands since the 13th. On April 17 the remainder of the defending armies capitulated; here, in Belgrade, is the scene when General Bodi (centre) presented the request for an armistice to the Nazi General Weichs (left).

Photo, E.N.A.

Chapter 158

GERMANY COMES TO THE AID OF ITALY IN GREECE

German Invasion, April 6, 1941—Enemy Reaches the Aegean—Fall of Salonika—British Forces on Main Defensive Line—Yugoslav Disaster—Monastir Gap Forced—British Stand at Ahinthaion—Withdrawal to Olympus Line—Heroic Exploits of Anzacs—A Halt on Thermopylae Line—Greek Northern Army Capitulates—King George Goes to Crete—Our Forces Cross Isthmus of Corinth—Imperial Troops Evacuated

SHORTLY before 6 a.m. on April 6 the German armies in Bulgaria crossed into Greece and attacked the Metaxas Line. They came across the frontier at five points: down the Struma valley to the Rupel pass, making for Salonika; over the Nevrokop plateau in the direction of Drama and Kavella; towards Zante; towards Komotine; and down the Maritsa valley.

The first Greek communiqué, issued in Athens that same night, stated that "powerful German forces, equipped with the most modern war machines, supported by tanks, abundant heavy artillery and numerous aircraft, this (Sunday) morning attacked suddenly and repeatedly our positions, which were defended only by very small Greek forces." It was stated that a very violent struggle had taken place all day long in the main zone in the area of the Bulgarian frontier, particularly in the district of the Struma valley, and that the Greek forces were putting up a very hard fight against the aggressor with their restricted means. With one solitary exception, the forts were still resisting, but some areas of the national territory had been evacuated. This last note was a reference to Greek Thrace, which had long been regarded as being militarily indefensible. Thus with little fighting the Germans were able to reach the Aegean at Alexandroupolis on April 9.



BRITISH COMMANDER IN GREECE

Lieut.-General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, who commanded the 'Forces of the Empire' in the short Greek campaign, had won renown as commander of the Army of the Nile in Wavell's Libyan offensive.

From the drawing by Capt. Peter McIntyre, by courtesy of New Zealand Government

For two days practically the whole Greek line along the Bulgarian frontier held fast, although in the Rupel pass sector Istimbey and Kelkaya were overrun; the main forts of Rupel and Ussita completely repulsed persistent attacks by tanks and dive bombers. The next day, April 8, the forts of Perithori and Dassavli were temporarily captured by the Germans, but recaptured almost at once in the course of Greek counter-attacks. So far the situation could be regarded as being well in hand, but now the German thrust against the Yugoslavs in the Strumitza pass on the Greek left developed apace. On April 8 the invaders captured Doiran, thus reaching the Greco-Yugoslav frontier, 22 miles to the rear of the extreme edge of the Greek lines, and entering Greek territory by the flat corridor east of the Vardar. Very small Greek mechanized formations fought an unequal battle against an enemy incomparably superior both in numbers and in quality. They were swept aside, and at dawn on April 9 the Germans entered Salonika—not, however, before the great port had been stripped of most of the material and equipment which might have proved useful to the enemy.

Units Engaged in Greece, April 10—May 2, 1941

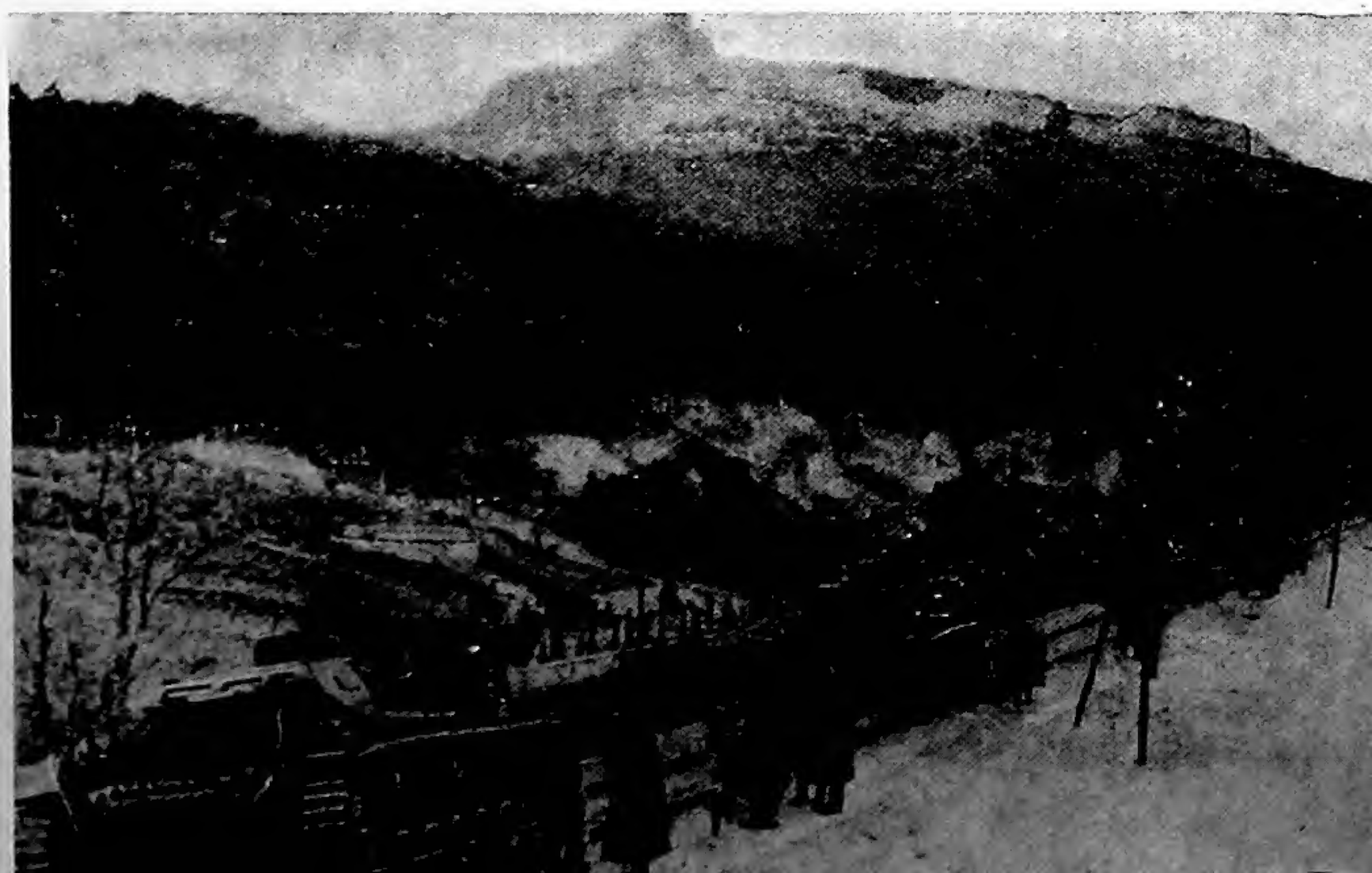
Royal Armoured Corps (Hussars)	Royal Artillery
Royal Armoured Corps (Royal Tank Regt.)	Royal Engineers
Royal Horse Artillery	The Rangers (K.R.R.C.)
	Cypriot and Palestinian units

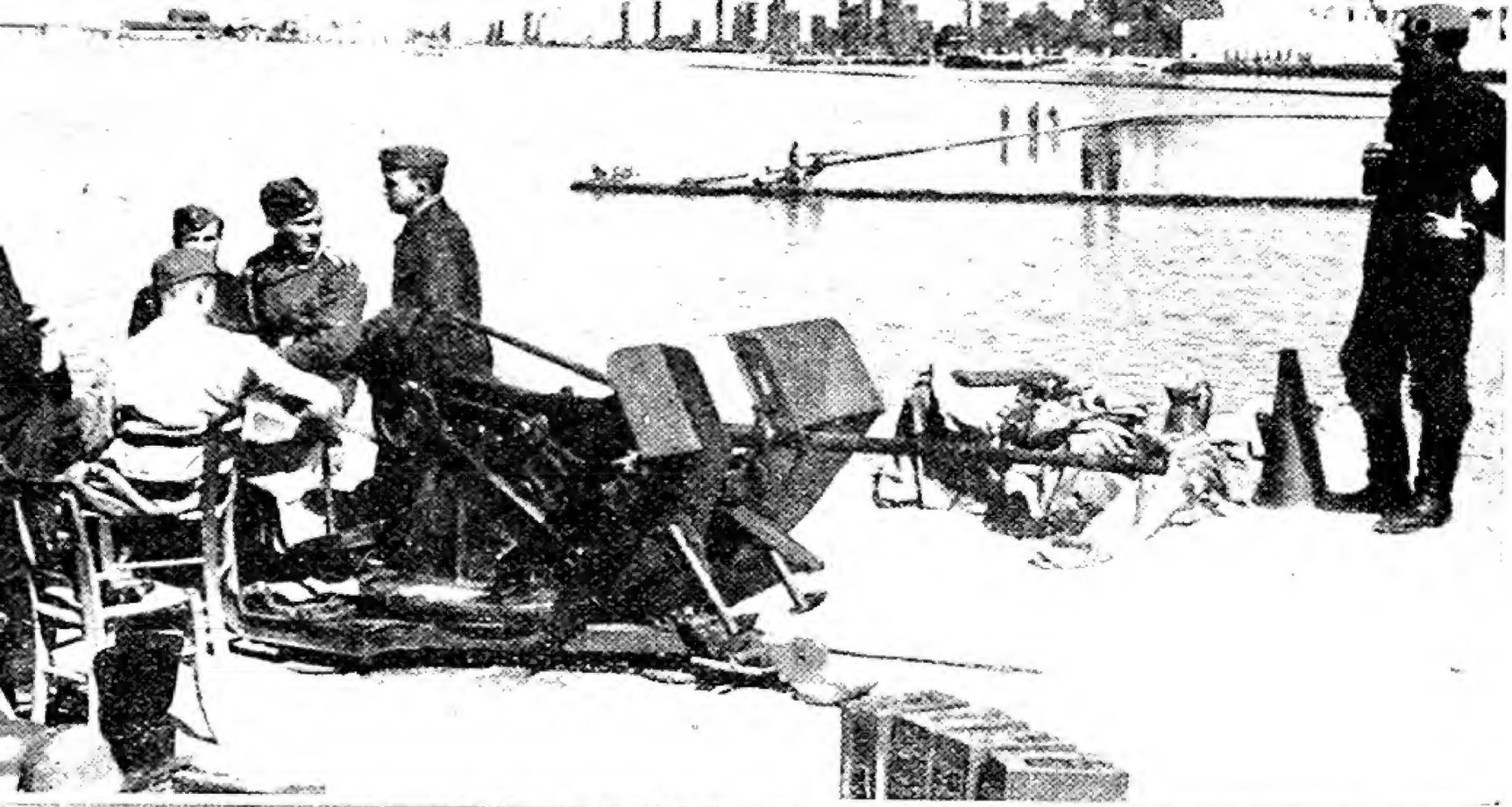
Following the fall of this city, the Greek units in Eastern Macedonia, numbering only three divisions all told, were cut off from their comrades west of the Vardar. Their position was hopeless. Nevertheless for several days they maintained their lines intact and only

GERMAN TANKS MOVE ALONG TO LARISSA

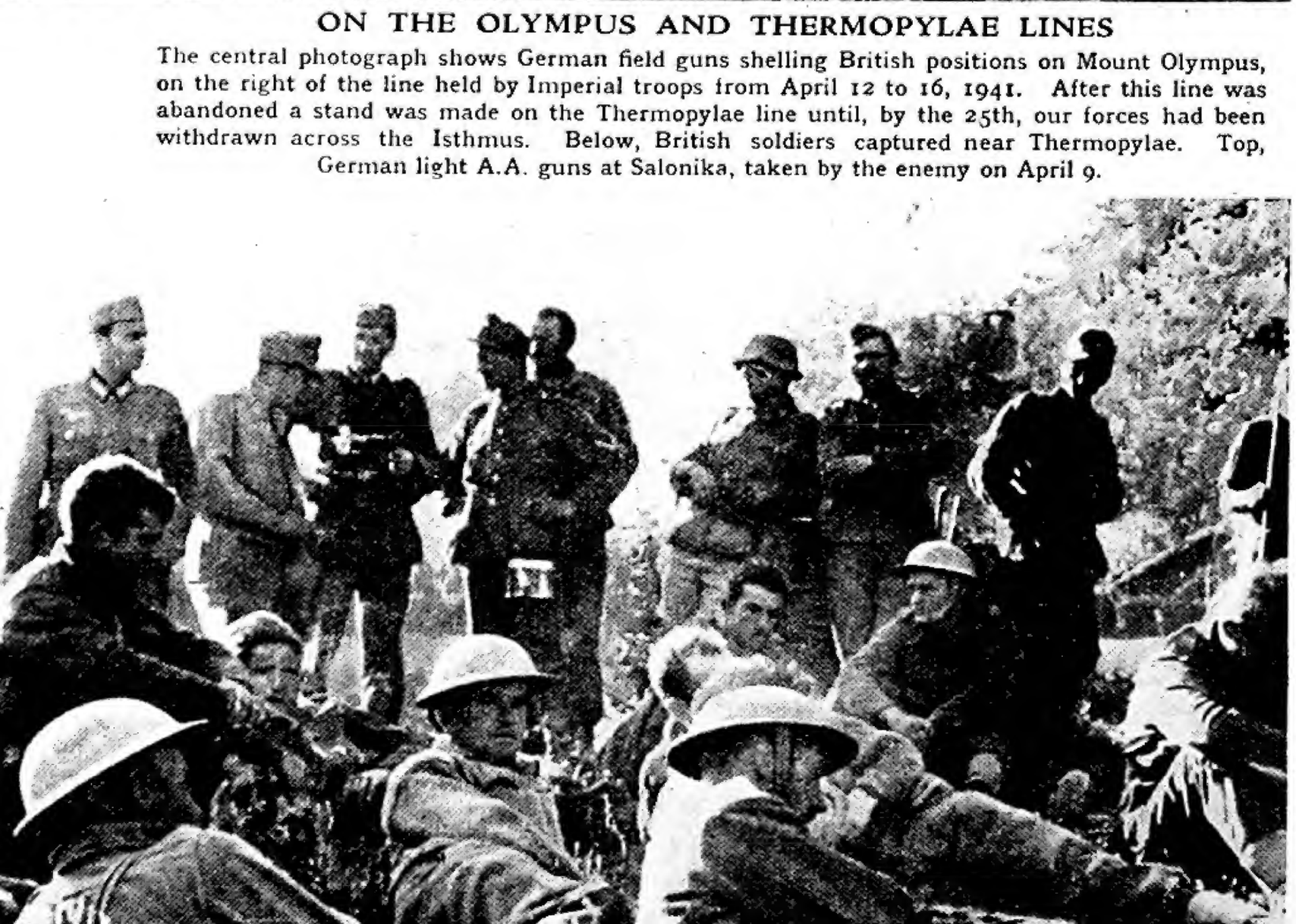
Driving gingerly along the railway tracks, in many cases the only practicable route through mountain ranges, enemy medium tanks are seen against the background of the mountain fort of Polikastell, where fierce fighting took place.

Photo, Associated Press









ON THE OLYMPUS AND THERMOPYLAE LINES

The central photograph shows German field guns shelling British positions on Mount Olympus, on the right of the line held by Imperial troops from April 12 to 16, 1941. After this line was abandoned a stand was made on the Thermopylae line until, by the 25th, our forces had been withdrawn across the Isthmus. Below, British soldiers captured near Thermopylae. Top, German light A.A. guns at Salonika, taken by the enemy on April 9.

when further resistance was seen to be useless, substantial numbers were evacuated.

As we have indicated, the Allied Command under General Papagos, the Greek Commander-in-Chief, had never intended to try to do more than delay the Germans on the Metaxas Line in Eastern Macedonia and Greek Thrace.

British Positions

The main defensive line was west of the Vardar, where facing the Monastir Gap were two Greek divisions and the newly arrived " Forces of the Empire," under the command of Lt.-Gen. Sir H. Maitland Wilson. These had taken up a strong enough line of defence, running for some 60 to 70 miles from the sea near Katerini, through Veria and Edessa, to the Yugoslav frontier. East of this line was a British armoured force, charged in the main with demolition work and harassing activities. Then to the west, with its left flank on the Adriatic, the main Greek Army was continuing its offensive against the Italians in Albania. In between this main Greek body and General Wilson's force the mountains of southern Yugoslavia formed a barrier, pierced by the Monastir Gap, manned only by mountain guards, since it had been anticipated that the Yugoslavs would be able to hold their own in southern Serbia.

But as early as the evening of April 7 the disaster which had overtaken the Yugoslav forces was all too apparent. Practically no reserves were available, but a small British force, under a Brigadier and consisting only of a machine-gun battalion and some medium artillery, was formed near Ahinthaion, south of Florina. Next day General MacKay was sent with his divisional headquarters, some artillery, one anti-tank regiment, and an Australian brigade (less one battalion) to augment these troops—henceforth known as MacKay Force—which remained in the Ahinthaion neighbourhood awaiting the German onslaught. Meanwhile, the armoured brigade operating in the neighbourhood of the Vardar was ordered to blow up its demolitions, and withdrew to Edessa behind the Australian division, which had now come into the line, and under whose orders it was placed.

These dispositions were made only just in time. On April 9 the Germans south of Florina, hotly engaged General MacKay's little force. Heavy losses were inflicted on the enemy, but they came on in overwhelming numbers and on April 11 the Imperial and Greek forces began their withdrawal

to a new line, which had its right flank on the sea, south-east of Mount Olympus, whence it ran north-west to Serbia, thence south-west along the river Aliakmon, and finally north-west again along the high ground to the west of the plain of Kozani. MacKay Force, now considerably reduced in number, retreated down the Kozani valley and took up its position in the centre of the new line, while the armoured force moved to Grevena on its left. From Serbia to the sea and along the Aliakmon the line was held by the Anzacs —for so the Australian Corps was known from April 12, in accordance with an order issued by Sir Thomas Blamey, the Australian G.O.C.—while the high ground bordering Kozani plain was defended by two Greek divisions.

But the Greeks, having fought with the utmost gallantry and suffered very severe casualties, were almost incapable of further prolonged resistance, and the full weight of the German onslaught was swung against the Imperial troops. An account of the fighting was given in the bulletin issued by the Greek Press Ministry on April 20.

"In the Kalabaka area," it said, "the Germans, advancing in waves, attempted at all costs to force the pass. They failed, and paid dearly for their failure. In the Olympus area the Germans continued to sacrifice their soldiers by the thousand, without being able to break through. The heroic exploits of our Allies, the Australians and New Zealanders, are weaving new legends around the slopes of Mount Olympus . . ."

But a new retreat was inevitable, since following the smashing of the Greeks on the left the Allied positions were outflanked. Orders were thereupon given that the troops should withdraw to new positions—to the Thermopylae Line, running south of Lamia. The operations began on April 14 and developed into a series of hard-fought rearguard actions; particularly in and around Larissa was there fighting of the most furious character. Kalabaka was held by an Australian brigade, until the left flank had been successfully withdrawn, while a New Zealand brigade took up a covering position north of Tirnavos. Another small New Zealand force held the eastern entrance to the Peneios gorge, south of Mount Olympus. It was heavily engaged by a greatly superior enemy force and compelled to give ground. On April 16 two Australian battalions went to its support, and this small Anzac force, now about the strength of a brigade, fought a most bitter battle against two German divisions in the Peneios gorge. It suffered heavy losses, but our right flank was

On the Thermopylae Line



AUSTRALIANS AND NEW ZEALANDERS WIN FRESH LAURELS

Top, New Zealanders on the way to their battle stations. Below, Australians reach Athens from North Africa. In a tribute on April 20, 1941, the Greek Press Ministry spoke of the heroic exploits of the Australians and New Zealanders in the Mount Olympus area.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright: Keystone



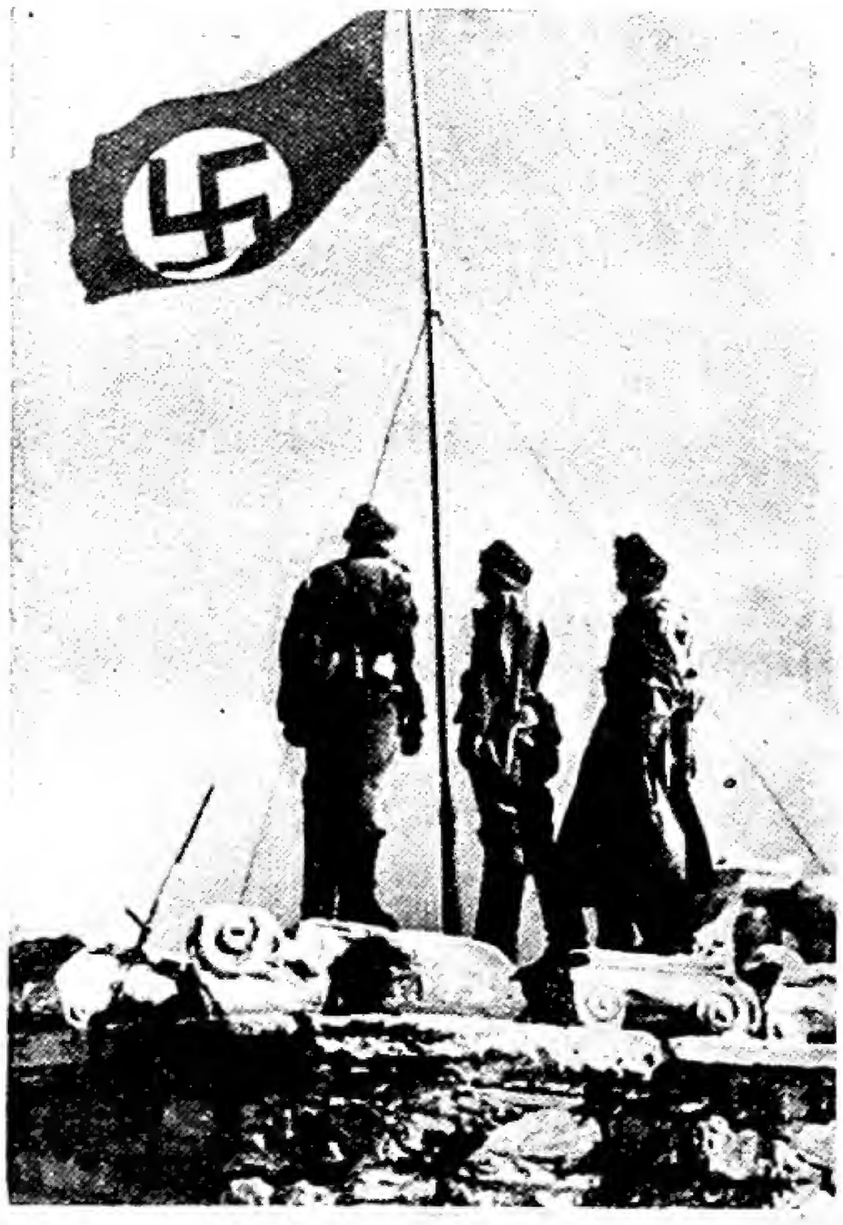
enabled to withdraw. So for nearly a week the Forces of the Empire withdrew across the plain. But every now and again they turned at bay.

By April 20 the withdrawal to the Thermopylae Line was practically complete, but already it was realized that it could be but a temporary halting-place. Moreover, the Greeks were now on the verge of collapse, and, indeed, on April 22 the Greek Northern Army capitulated to the 12th German Army, while the Greeks in the Epirus sector surrendered to the Italian 11th Army. "It is confirmed that at the time of their capitulation," stated the Greek High Command on April 24, "the Italian forces had not succeeded in entering Greek territory, but were held by our troops on Albanian territory"; and from Berlin came the reminder to Mussolini, who was now boasting of his great and glorious victory, that the Italians up to the end were being held by the Greeks, and that it was only the threat of being taken in the rear by the Germans that had induced the Greeks in Epirus to capitulate.

It was a cruel hour for Greece, as tragedy piled upon tragedy. The Prime Minister, M. Korizis, died suddenly on April 18, and the new Prime Minister who succeeded him after a few days' interregnum, M. Tsouderos, took office in a moment of incomparable difficulty. Then, following the announcement of the capitulation of the Greek armies in Epirus and Macedonia, the King had to announce that

> "the cruel destiny of war today compels us, Us and the Heir to the Throne, as well as the lawful Government, to leave Athens and transfer the capital to Crete, whence we shall be able to continue the struggle . . . freely, and from free Greek territory, against the invaders, until a final victory is achieved."

M. Tsouderos also addressed a message to the nation, striking the same note of firm confidence. "Hold firm," he told them. "Be assured that the dawn of a brilliant day for the nation will not fail to break, and that day will be the greatest of Greek civilization."





HOISTING THE HAKENKREUZ UPON THE ACROPOLIS

Entering Athens on April 27, 1941, the Nazis lost no time in flaunting their hooked-cross or swastika flag—symbol of cruelty and oppression. Top, the German flag goes up over the Acropolis. Lower photograph, a German A.A. battery in Athens, with the Acropolis in background.

Photos, Associated Press



EMMANUEL TSOUDEROS

Three days after the sudden death of M. Korizis the King of the Hellenes called upon M. Tsouderos to take office as Premier, under conditions of unparalleled gravity. Tsouderos later accompanied his King to Crete, and subsequently came by way of Egypt and South Africa to London.

From a drawing by Capt. Peter McIntyre, by courtesy of the New Zealand Government

Before leaving for Crete the Greek Government sent a note to the British Minister in Athens expressing its gratitude to the British Government and the gallant Imperial troops for the aid which they had extended to Greece in her defence against the aggressor.

Thermopylae Line Abandoned

By now, indeed, the abandonment of the Thermopylae positions had been begun, since not only were the Germans delivering a tremendous frontal assault, but, following the Greek collapse in Epirus, fresh German columns were advancing from Yannina through Arta and Agrinion to take the Imperial forces in the rear. On April 22 a New Zealand brigade was withdrawn to hold the pass south of Erythrai to keep this fresh menace in check, while the remainder of the Imperial forces were withdrawn across the Isthmus of Corinth to embarkation areas which were hurriedly arranged in southern Greece. On April 25 the last of the forces in the Thermopylae positions withdrew behind Erythrai. Their retreat uncovered Athens, and on April 27 an announcement from Berlin, stated that

> "after unflagging attacks and pursuit movements, an advance German armoured column entered Athens at 9.25 this (Sunday) morning. The swastika flag flies over the Acropolis."

A later German High Command announcement said that the isthmus and town of Corinth had been captured

THE RACE TO THE ISTHMUS

Fighting against enormous odds, Imperial forces along the Thermopylae line were compelled on April 25, 1941, to fall back towards the Isthmus of Corinth, cut by the ship canal (right, centre), towards which Nazi motorized units were rushing to sever the line of retreat. But the enemy was too late to stop the withdrawal, though his parachute troops entered Corinth on April 26. Top, German advance units speeding along the Gulf shore towards Corinth ; left, centre, enemy parachutists descending upon the Isthmus ; lower, right, parachutists guarding British soldiers taken prisoner.

Photos, Associated Press ; Keystone



BRITISH AND IMPERIAL TROOPS EVACUATED FROM GREECE

Between the nights of April 24-25 and April 30-May 1, 1941, some 45,000 of our troops were got away by the Royal Navy, and there is nothing in this photograph to suggest the stern ordeal undergone by our men, some hint of which is afforded by the story, in an adjoining column, of the conspicuous gallantry and daring which won Sergt. Hinton his V.C.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

by German parachute troops on the previous morning. The canal had been secured by the Adolf Hitler S.S. Division, which, advancing from the west of the Pindus range, had reached the Gulf of Patras and crossed into the Peloponnese.

With the Germans at their heels, the Forces of the Empire made for the southern ports and beaches, where Admiral Cunningham's ships were waiting to take them away. The evacuation began on the night of April 24–25. Grim pictures were painted by German spokesmen.

"The remnants of the fleeing British troops are now trying to escape from various harbours in Greece," ran one report, "in barges, fishing boats and all sorts of vessels, leaving behind arms, war material and equipment of all kinds. A large number of vessels have been sunk and many others damaged. Many sailing boats and other vessels have been bombed and machine-gunned, some on the beaches and some at sea."

Beginning, as we have said, on the night of April 24–25, the withdrawal of the Allied troops continued from the areas of Rapthis and Nauplia, Raphina, Monemvasia, and Kithera, night after night, until just after midnight on April 30–May 1, when the Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean reported that about 45,000 Imperial troops and R.A.F. had been withdrawn from Greece, and also a large number of refugees. Since the number of troops landed in Greece had been some 60,000 men, this represented a very satisfactory percentage considering the enormous difficulties of the operation. It is surprising, too, that only two warships, the "Diamond" and the "Wryneck," were sunk during the withdrawal.

In his speech in the House of Commons on April 30, Mr. Churchill summed up the campaign.

"The conduct of our troops," he said, "especially the rearguard, in fighting their way through many miles to the sea, merits the highest praise. This is the first instance where air-bombing, prolonged day after day, has failed to break the discipline and order of the marching columns, who, besides being thus assailed from the air, were pursued by no less than three German armoured divisions, as well as by the whole strength of the German mechanized forces which could be brought to bear.

"In the actual fighting," the Premier continued, "principally on Mount Olympus, around Grevena, and at Thermopylae, about 3,000 casualties, killed and wounded, are reported to have been suffered by our troops. This is a very small part of the losses inflicted on the Germans, who on several occasions, sometimes for two days at a time, were brought to a standstill by forces one-fifth of their number."



SGT. JOHN DANIEL HINTON, V.C.

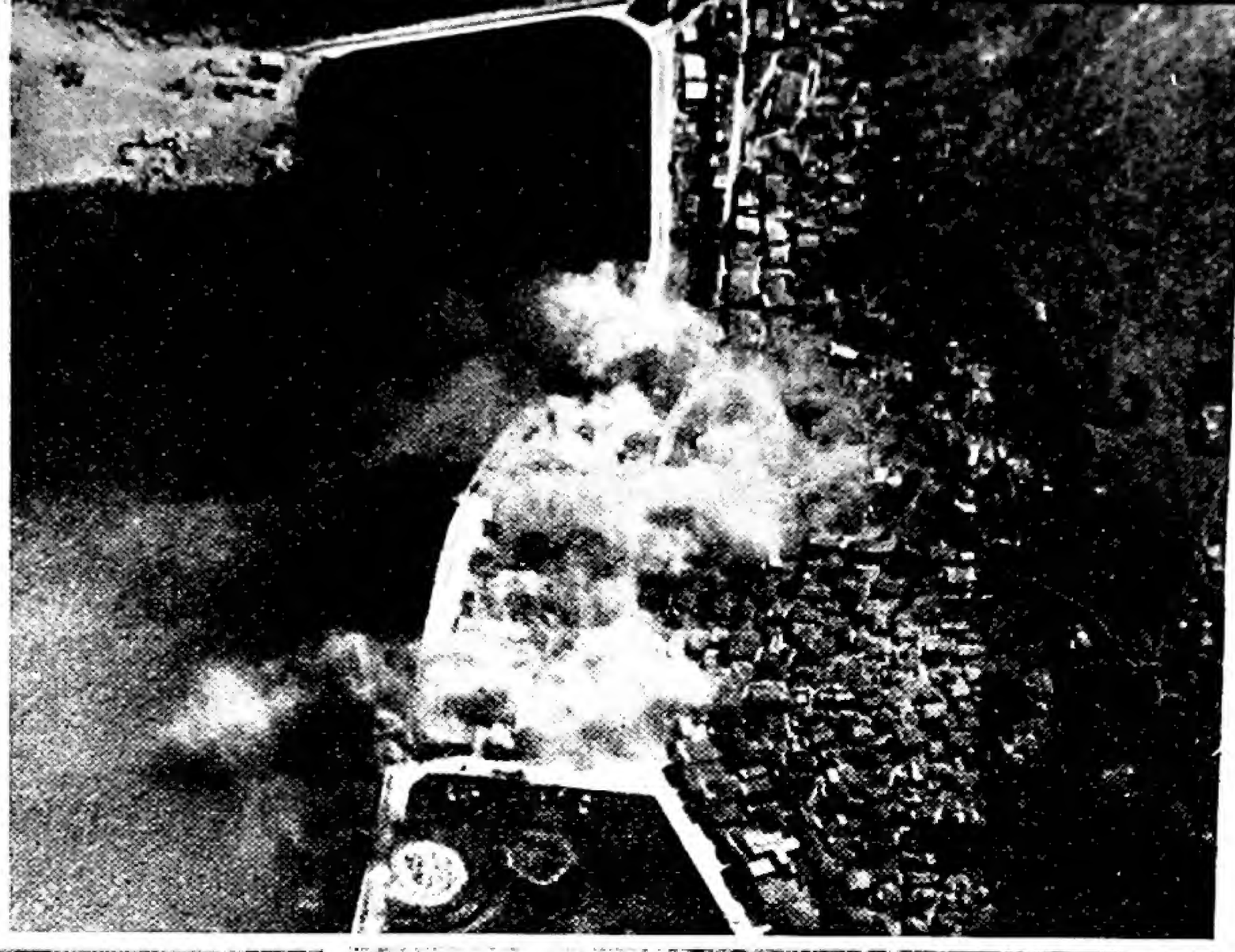
While British and N.Z. troops were awaiting embarkation at Kalamai, on April 18-19, 1941, Hinton (of the N.Z. Military Forces) attacked the 6-inch-gun crew of an approaching enemy armoured force. Other gun crews took refuge in two houses, where Hinton and other New Zealanders attacked them with the bayonet and thus held the guns until overwhelming enemy forces arrived. Hinton then fell with an abdominal wound and was taken prisoner

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

EVACUATION PORTS IN PELOPONNESUS

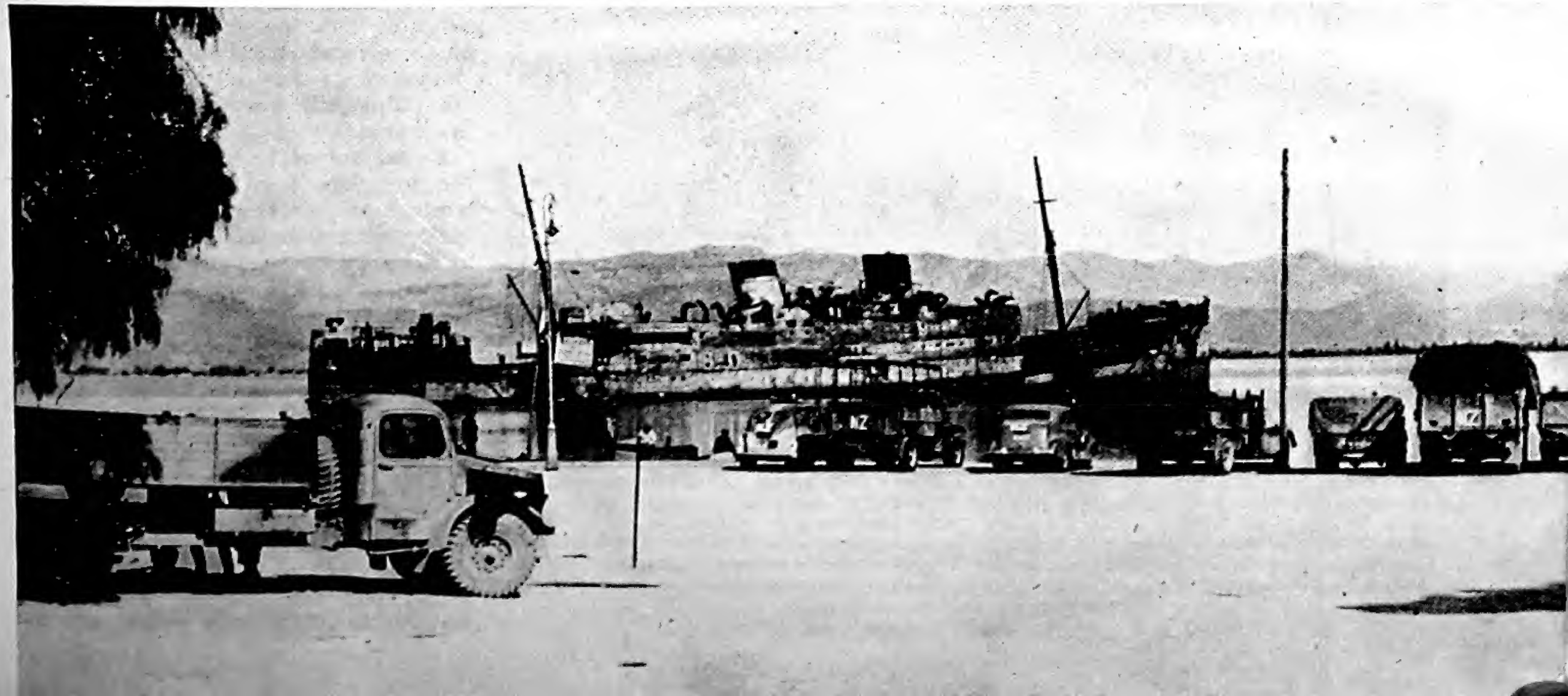
Kalamai (top, right) was the scene of much heroism as British and Imperial troops were embarked in the final withdrawal from Greece : the photograph shows an enemy air raid. Nauplia, on the Gulf of that name, was repeatedly bombed during the embarkation, and in the bottom photograph are seen abandoned British trucks and cars, with a burned-out Union Castle steamer behind. Centre, left, a Sunderland flying boat used as a troop transport ; right, British troops destroying equipment before leaving.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright ; Associated Press.









Chapter 159

GRIM BATTLE OF CRETE, MAY 19—JUNE 1, 1941

Nazi Bombers Attack Crete—Aerial Invasion Begins—Enemy Lands by Parachute, Glider and Troop-Carrier—Troop 'Planes Arrive One Per Minute —Strange and Grim Battle—Our Fighters Withdrawn—Attempts to Capture King George: He Leaves for Egypt—25,000 Nazis in Crete by Air—Aerodromes Could Not be Held Against the Enemy—After Twelve Days of Epic Resistance Imperial Forces are Withdrawn—Gallant Rearguard of British Marines

THE battle of Crete, "that fantastic battle" as it has been well styled, in which for the first time in history an island was captured from the air, opened on May 19, when a great host of Nazi bombers roared across the narrow seas from their aerodromes on the Greek mainland and heavily plastered Canea, the capital; Suda Bay, where the Royal Navy had established itself; and Candia (Heraklion).

Following this the onslaught proper was launched at dawn the next day, an onslaught novel in conception and development, if not in its result.

Speaking in the House of Commons on May 20, Mr. Churchill said that

"an air-borne attack in great strength has begun this morning, and what cannot fail to be a serious battle has begun and is developing. Our troops there—British, New Zealanders and Greek forces—are under the command of General Freyberg, and we feel confident that most stern and resolute resistance will be offered to the enemy."

A few hours later the Premier added to his statement. There had been a good deal of intense bombing of Suda Bay, he revealed, and of the various aerodromes in the neighbourhood; particularly heavy fighting was going on in the Canea-Meleka area, where some 1,500 enemy troops landed by gliders, parachutes and troop-carriers.

Units Engaged in Crete, May 19—June 1

Royal Artillery	York & Lancaster Regt.
Royal Engineers	Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders
Leicestershire Regt.	The Rangers (K.R.R.C.)
Welch Regt.	
Black Watch	

From about two in the morning until dark the parachutists continued to arrive near Suda Bay and in the Meleka (Akrotiri) peninsula. Altogether some 3,000 were landed in the course of the day, and General Freyberg reported that 1,800 of them had been taken prisoner, wounded, or killed.

At 4.30 the next morning more air-borne invaders arrived—some 3,000 or so—but most of them were accounted for in two hours of fierce hand-to-hand fighting. The gaps in the enemy ranks were soon filled, however. Altogether the Nazis were said to have employed 1,200 troop-carriers, and at the height of the attack they were landing at the rate of one a minute. Terrific toll was taken of the attackers by the defenders on the ground and the fighter 'planes—though these were all too few—in the air. But still the Germans came on in swarms.



INDOMITABLE FREYBERG

With his V.C., won so long ago as 1916 on the Ancre, when he was four times wounded, and his D.S.O. with two bars, Major-General Bernard Cyril Freyberg was indeed a fitting commander of the British, New Zealand and Greek forces in the heroic battle for Crete.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



SERGEANT A. C. HULME, V.C., AND 2nd LIEUT. C. K. UPHAM, V.C.

From the beginning of the fighting in Crete until he was put out of action on May 28 Sergeant Hulme distinguished himself by leading parties against enemy groups and destroying them; he stalked and killed many snipers, and was severely wounded while engaged in such an operation. Second Lieut. Upham, a New Zealander like Hulme, showed "outstanding leadership, tactical skill and utter indifference to danger." Commanding a forward platoon in the attack on Maleme (May 22), he fought his way for 3,000 yards against a defence organized in depth. He personally destroyed M.G. posts holding up his sections. In later operations he displayed equally superb courage and skill.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Central Press

Invasion From the Skies

Never indeed had the versatility of the aeroplane been so clearly demonstrated as in those days of furious battle. It was revealed as the supreme weapon in the modern armoury, the most deadly, the most revolutionary. By day the scene was fantastic enough as the Junkers swept slowly in from across the sea, and the paratroops dropped "like confetti from the clear skies," as one observer put it, landing in the very middle of the defenders' positions. But the scene was even more fantastic after dark, when the sky was lit with flames and tracer shells, and the swaying parachutists floating to earth were picked out by



PARACHUTE TROOPS WHO CAPTURED CRETE

In centre, left, German Fallschirmjaeger are seen in difficulties with their equipment (dropped by separate parachutes and collected later). Below, men of a Nazi Alpine unit cross a brook. Many of the enemy were taken prisoner, and some are seen above with their British guards.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright ; Associated Press



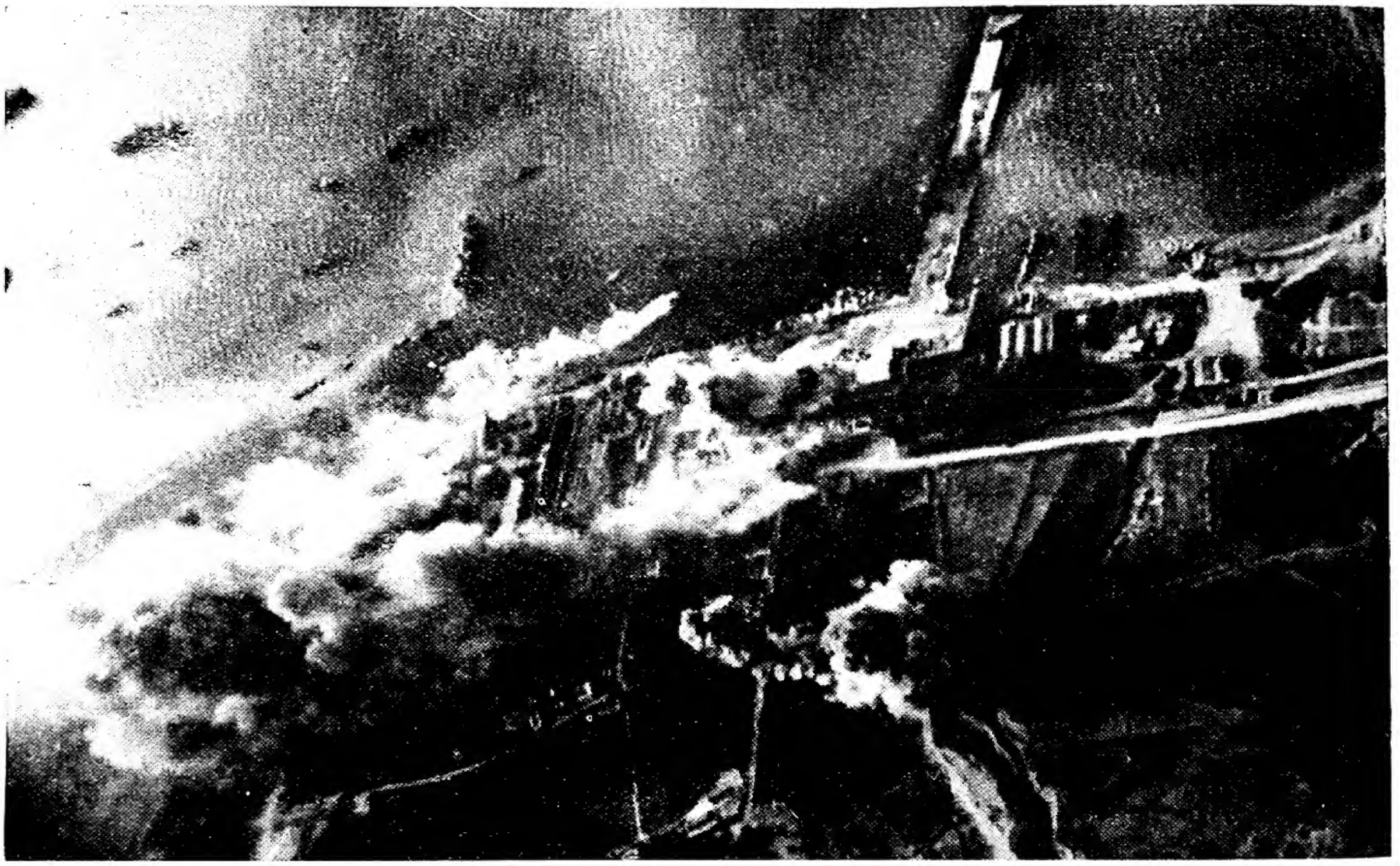


the searchlights, against the sombre background of the night sky. Well might Mr. Churchill describe it—in the House of Commons on May 22—as

"a most strange and grim battle. Our side has no air support, because they have no aerodromes, not because they have no aeroplanes. The other side has very little or nothing of artillery or tanks. Neither side has any means of retreat."

From this statement it was obvious that the British fighters had had to be withdrawn from the island since the aerodromes were few—there were only three, at Maleme, Heraklion and Retimo—and ill-equipped, and the bases were being continuously attacked by the enemy Stukas; henceforth air support had to be furnished from aerodromes in Egypt. But several enemy attempts to land from the sea had been frustrated by Admiral Cunningham's ships (although not without some loss; *see* Chapter 173); and as a whole the situation was such as permitted the spokesman of the British G.H.Q. in Cairo to claim that it was well in hand.

Side by side with the British and New Zealanders, Greek troops to the number of some 1,500, supported by thousands of Cretan islanders of all ages and including many women, were fighting desperately for the national soil and for their hearths and homes. Particularly terrible and bloody was the struggle for Canea, said the Greek



STUKAS BLAST A WAY FOR PARACHUTISTS AT SUDA

After the capture of Canea, on May 27, 1941, the Germans were able to concentrate against Suda Bay, used by our forces as a naval base. By May 29 the British were compelled to withdraw to the east of Suda. This photograph was taken during a German dive-bombing attack on the harbour ; bombs are seen bursting on the shore works.

Photo, Keystone

Prime Minister, M. Tsouderos, and the Greek defence of Candia had been particularly praiseworthy.

"For six consecutive days Greek soldiers kept up the fight, and, proving much superior in courage, boldness and fighting capacity to the invaders, mopped up the German parachutists."

This enabled the British troops to hold the aerodrome without diversion, and to defend the coastal area near the town for a vital space.

"In one of many encounters all the parachutists were exterminated, but at the same time over 300 Cretans fell, and a large number were wounded. British officers relate that young militiamen, boys of 17, were disarming Germans and using their arms skilfully like seasoned soldiers."

At Retimo the sacrifices of the Greeks were also heavy, continued M. Tsouderos, and among the victims of an epic battle were the Governor, a former member of Parliament, and the town's chief constable.

One of the objectives of the invaders was to capture King George of the Hellenes and the members of his Government who had removed to Crete when the situation in Greece became impossible. Parachutists made a determined attempt to capture King George, but he left his house near Canea just in time. All the same he and his party had a hazardous journey across rugged country—exposed all the time to Nazi bombers—to Panagya, where arrangements were made for the King's embarkation. On May 24 it was announced that the King and the Government had left Crete for Egypt.

On the second day of the struggle, on May 21 that is, the enemy secured a foothold on the Maleme aerodrome in the west of the island, and not all the most heroic and determined efforts on the part of the defenders succeeded in dislodging him. To Maleme and the adjacent fields and beaches crowded the Nazi troop-carriers, and although many were destroyed in the air and fell crashing to earth with their human freight, though many more were burnt out on the ground following attacks by British 'planes, still there was no stopping the stream. The enemy was steadily and powerfully reinforced, and, as on so many other occasions before and since, developed a vast superiority in the air. On May 24 Canea, Retimo and Candia were subjected to a bombing which, said M. Tsouderos, "was carried out with mathematical precision." Houses and hospitals were razed to the ground. Orthodox churches and Turkish mosques were involved in a common ruin, and thousands of non combatants were machine-gunned.

By May 26 the Nazis, it was estimated, had succeeded in getting 25,000 men ashore in Crete, and from the bridgeheads they had established they pushed out steadily. Then, adopting battle formation, they marched against Canea and Suda Bay, and on May 26 succeeded in penetrating the Allied positions. The next day the penetration was enlarged to such an extent that the Empire forces were compelled to retreat. Another twenty-four hours passed, and on May 28 the German communiqué had it that "German Alpine troops broke down the stubborn resistance of British forces and insurgent [i.e. Cretan] bands, despite the difficult terrain. In a bold attack they thrust the enemy out of his positions, took the capital, Canea, and pursued the beaten enemy."

Now that they were in Canea, the Germans were able to control Suda Bay itself, and on May 29 it was announced by British G.H.Q. that the Empire forces

SIDELIGHTS ON THE CRETAN BATTLE

The alluvial plains on the north side of the island afforded scanty cover and favoured airborne invasion : lower photograph shows British troops on the look-out. Top, left, at the alert in a trench ; the long bayonet here seems an encumbrance, and some months later a much shorter one, only six inches long, was issued with a new rifle. Improvised air-raid shelters in caves are illustrated at top right and centre.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright



had withdrawn to positions east of Suda Bay. Then on June 1 came a War Office communiqué which announced that all the British and Empire forces had been withdrawn from Crete.

"After twelve days of what has undoubtedly been the fiercest fighting in this war," it read, "it was decided to withdraw our forces from Crete. Although the losses we inflicted on the enemy's troops and aircraft have been enormous, it became clear that our naval and military forces could not be expected to operate indefinitely in and near Crete without more air support than could be provided from our bases in Africa. Some 15,000 of our troops have been withdrawn to Egypt, but it must be admitted that our losses have been severe."

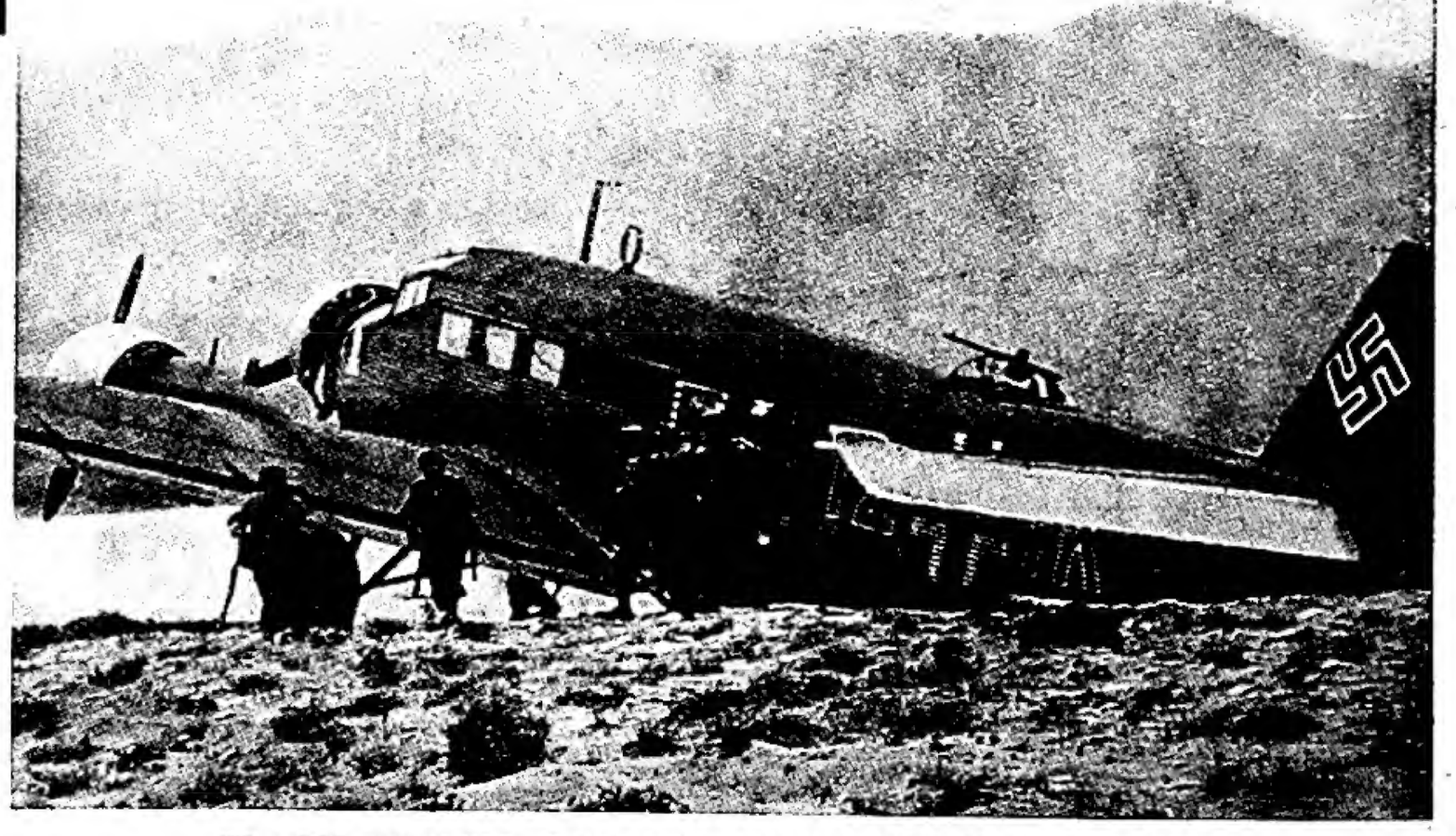
Those who had been fighting in the Candia and Retimo sectors were taken off by British cruisers, among them the "Orion," and destroyers; but far more difficult was the evacuation of those who were engaged in the main battlefields near Suda Bay, at Canea and about Maleme. Since the enemy was in control of Suda Bay no ships could approach, and there was nothing for it but a thirty-mile trek across the mountains to Crete's southern shore. For forty-eight hours the battle-weary men struggled over the mountains. They were hungry and thirsty, cold and weary, and the weather was altogether vile; moreover, the enemy was close on their heels, kept at bay by only a tiny rearguard, while above their heads the sky was filled with Nazi 'planes. Still the thin column of dusty khaki plodded over those barren uplands and at last slithered down to the beaches, where for hours they lay waiting for ships which might, or might not, come. But come the ships did, and thousands of men were taken off in safety. One of the ships engaged in the work of rescue was the Australian cruiser "Perth"; she em-

Imperial Troops Evacuated

barked more than 1,200 men, but before she reached Alexandria she was bombed solidly for seven hours one day, for thirteen hours on another. But thousands of gallant men, wounded and unwounded, had to be left behind. Amongst them were 1,400 out of an original force of 2,000 Royal Marines who were included in the rearguard in the retreat from Suda Bay. On May 31 General Wavell sent a special message to General Weston of the Royal Marines expressing his admiration for the great fight they had put up against such odds.

Ten days later the House of Commons debated Crete. Many bitter and highly critical things were said, but Mr. Churchill in his reply was able to convince, or at least to silence, most of the critics. It had been hoped, he said, "that 25,000 or 30,000 troops with artillery and tanks, added to the Greek forces, would have been able to destroy the parachutists and glider landings of the enemy and to prevent him from using the airfields and harbours. But this did not prove possible." All the same, it was a wonderful thing, he claimed, that 17,000 men had been got safely away from the island in face of the enemy's overwhelming command of the air.

"I do not consider that we should regret the battle of Crete. The fighting there attained a severity and fierceness which the Germans had not previously encountered in their walk through Europe. In killed, wounded, missing and prisoners we lost about 15,000 men. This takes no account of the losses of the Greeks and Cretans, who fought with the utmost bravery and suffered heavily. On the other hand, about 5,000 Germans were drowned in trying to cross the sea and at least 12,000 were killed or wounded on the island. The German Air Force suffered extraordinary losses. Above 180 fighter and bomber aircraft were destroyed, and at least 250 troop-carrying aeroplanes, and this, at a time when our own strength is overtaking the enemy's, is important."



CRAFT WHICH CARRIED THE ENEMY TO CRETE

Sacrificing other considerations to the prime object of getting the men down, German transport 'planes and gliders made crash-landings freely. The lower photograph shows a troop-carrier disgorging its load after alighting on a hillside. Top, a crashed glider, with two of its passengers lying dead; an example of efficient and economical construction, it lent itself to rapid production in quantity for this campaign.

Photos, British Official: Crown copyright; E.N.A.

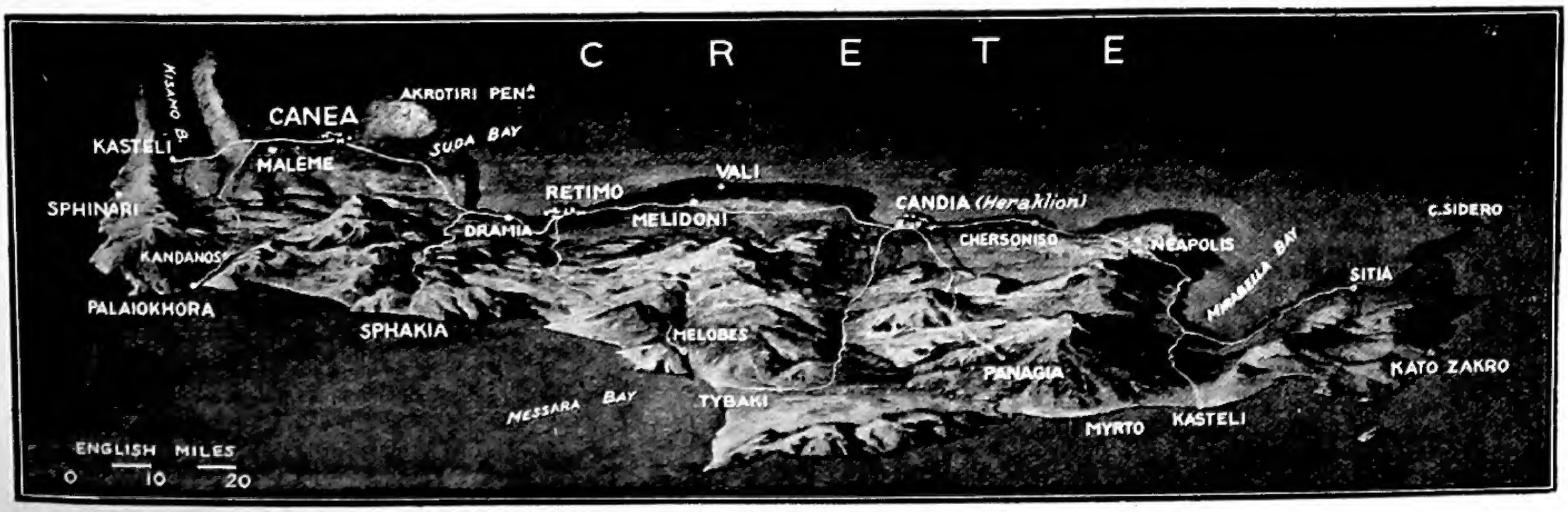
Leaving out of consideration the wider implications of this check to the Nazi eastward drive and the hindering of Hitler's plans, Mr. Churchill went on to put the battle into its true perspective. "It will be found," he said, "that this sombre, ferocious battle was well worth fighting, and will play an extremely important part in the whole defence of the Nile valley throughout the present year."

It was reported from various sources that guerilla fighting, in which some British troops were included, continued in the mountains after the evacuation.

CAMPAIGN IN GREECE AND THE CAPTURE OF CRETE

For the German sweep through Yugoslavia the reader should refer to the special map in page 1620. The map above gives the main lines of the enemy thrusts into Greece, with the dates (in April) at which the principal objectives were reached. After evacuation our forces took up positions in the island of Crete (below), where on May 19, 1941, the German airborne invasion began. British forces were withdrawn from the island on June 1.

Specially drawn for THE SECOND GREAT WAR *by Félix Gardon*



HOW THE ISLAND OF CRETE WAS INVADED FROM THE AIR

The first invasion carried out by airborne troops, the fantastic battle of Crete, began on May 19, 1941 ; the main onslaught opened at dawn on the 20th. On the alluvial plains fringing the northern shore hundreds of enemy transport aircraft and gliders landed, while parachute troops descended in never-ending succession. Top, German parachute troops and equipment dropping down on Candia aerodrome. Below, the R.A.F. bombs Maleme after the German occupatio.1. The landing ground is strewn with wrecked enemy aircraft.